JAPANESE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION IN U.S. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

By

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Foreign languages in the elementary schools (FLES) programs have rebounded within public schools in the United States during the 1980s and early 1990s. This second cycle of FLES programs differs somewhat from the first round of modern FLES programs born in the early 1960s. That first round featured Spanish, French, and, to a lesser degree, German languages. This most recent cycle continues those languages but has introduced programs of less commonly taught languages, the most notable and rapidly growing of which is Japanese.

As a relatively new foreign language of instruction within the United States, particularly at the elementary level, Japanese instruction presents unresearched practices and challenges. This research utilizes case study methodology to explore the question, "What are the common characteristics of veteran teachers of Japanese in the early grades?" Interviews of a convenience sample of five subjects were utilized. Findings reveal that all subjects were native speakers of Japanese. The importance of

World War II to the proliferation and acceptance of Japanese language instruction in the United States is detailed. The influence of the Japanese language and cultural differences upon the instruction of the language are discussed. Program types, conditions necessary for program implementation and growth, and the relationship of Japanese language instruction to the fields of bilingual education and English as a second language are investigated.

CHAPTER 1
CONTEXT AND TREATMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Japanese language instruction in U.S. elementary schools has grown dramatically during the decade of the '90s. This growth trend mirrors the earlier rapid growth of instruction in Japanese language courses across secondary and collegiate levels during the decade of the '80s. Current numbers show Japanese language in the elementary schools to be the most rapidly growing of any foreign language instructed at that level (Japanese Language Learning, 1995).

Early language programs place great dependence on the foreign language teacher, who often works in isolation instructing the language, and who has often been called upon both to invent and to implement the program. The foreign language teacher is expected to possess the requisite skills of language and culture to meet the real or perceived instructional objectives. And, if the program is to continue, in most instances the teacher must employ those additional skills needed to manage and maintain the elementary foreign language program over the successive school years. These skills include strategies for effective classroom management, effective instructional delivery, and strategies needed to accomplish those actions that must be taken to maintain a consistent, continuous program.

Criteria for effective teaching have been vigorously examined during the past four decades by a number of researchers (White 1989; Allen, 1987; Good,1983; Brophy, 1979; Politzer & Weiss, 1971; Ryans, 1960). No clear consensus emerges

regarding characteristics of the ideal teacher and no firm agreement about the behaviors or needed qualifications arises (Ornstain,1991; Brown & Atkin, 1988; Borich,1986). Effective teaching related to specific disciplines and subject areas has been the subject of comparatively little research Brosh (1996). Observation of teaching/learning situations reveals both similarities and differences across cultures, settings, and subject areas. In the endeavor of teaching, success may be viewed differently from one educational context to the next. Historically in foreign languages, the absence of nationally recognized levels of student proficiency has hampered the usefulness of student achievement as an indicator of success on the part of the teacher, the student or the program.

Research does suggest that effective teaching in early language programs differs from the type of foreign language instruction traditionally reserved for older students (Curtain & Pesola, 1994, Heining-Boynton, 1991). Teachers of Japanese language suggest that the instruction of that tongue differs from the teaching of commonly taught languages (CTL) of French, Spanish and German. Japanese is reported to be difficult for native speakers of English to learn. Foreign languages in elementary schools are still somewhat novel for that level and age group. Instruction for younger children requires methods and strategies heretofore considered different from the pedagogy utilized with older students. Logic therefore posits that Japanese instruction in elementary schools must present uncommon challenges and practices unresearched. Is or should Japanese instruction be different from those languages historically taught in the United States?

The purpose of this study is to examine the common characteristics inherent in the lives and perspectives of veteran teachers of Japanese at the elementary school level. Findings will inform the field about Japanese language programs in the

elementary schools with regard to current practice and will contribute to the field of foreign languages in the elementary schools (FLES) for purposes of future planning and practice.

Literature Review

Eleanor Jorden's 1991 Resources, Practice and Investment Strategy is the most comprehensive survey to date of Japanese language instruction at any level within the United States. Her study undertook an in depth investigation of the kinds of Japanese language instruction currently available in public and private schools, colleges, universities and independent language schools.

For the portion of Jorden's study regarding early language learning, researchers on the project made site visits to three of the nine elementary school programs surveyed. Classroom observations were conducted and Japanese teachers and students enrolled in Japanese at those sites were interviewed. Findings detailed concerns regarding numerous aspects of Japanese language instruction in elementary schools, including the preparation of teachers, their longevity as teachers in programs, and the quality of Japanese being taught. The nine elementary schools surveyed were primarily in four states: Indiana, Michigan, New York, and Oregon. These states were chosen because of the numbers of Japanese programs located there, because of the administrative variety, and to give regional balance. The study suggested that the children are too young to handle the grammatical issues of the language. There was concern regarding the teaching of appropriate social behavior as it relates to the Japanese culture. Too, differences in aptitude began to emerge among children, an unanticipated problem in at least one of the programs. Investigators were unclear as to whether the children in the programs understood what it meant for a language to be

"foreign." The consensus was that programs of Japanese to preadolescent students are experimental.

Recommendations called for additional study, especially regarding the selection and training of teachers. Thus it appears that the variable "teacher" is recognized as a vital factor in the growth and maintenance of early Japanese language programs.

Heining-Boynton and Hart (1991) further detail the challenges of implementing and maintaining a less commonly taught (LCT) language program, and draw illustrations from an on-going K-12 Japanese language program in Raleigh, North Carolina. At the time the article was written, this researcher was the foreign language coordinator for that school district. Concerns raised included 1) lack of qualified teachers along with a lack of teacher training programs, 2) need for opportunities for staff to network, both to gain information and to avoid isolation, 3) need for long-term district commitment, 4) additional costs involved in program implementation and need for allocation of sufficient resources, 5) lack of appropriate program models, and 6) difficulty in securing appropriate curriculum and materials.

Walton (1993) suggests that the problem created by the phenomenal increase of instruction in Japanese language within the United States strains the capacity of the delivery system. He cites problems concerning a lack of trained teachers, lack of teacher training programs and lack of appropriate materials. Additionally, assessment tools, both to measure student achievement and to evaluate program growth were found to be inadequate.

The identified need for foreign language study in the elementary grades and subsequent investigation of Clarendon Elementary Japanese Bilingual Bicultural Program (JBBP) was the subject of a dissertation by the school's principal, Dr. Kanani Choy (1994). The school, part of the San Francisco California Unified School District,

supports the instruction of Japanese language and culture in kindergarten through grade five in Clarendon Elementary (Japanese language instruction is available in middle school and high school at other locations in the district). Selected parents and teachers joined with the researcher and used a technique described as dialogue retrospection to generate ideas for positive change in the program. The Japanese program at Clarendon is notable since it has been documented as the only existing two-way Japanese bilingual program within the U.S. (Christian & Mahrer, 1992) and is the earliest continuous program of Japanese in the elementary schools located by this researcher (Hart, 1996).

Darnall (1995) conducted surveys focused on areas of need in Japanese language education within the United States. Early Japanese language programs, with a particular emphasis on immersion programs, were included within his report. Suggestions regarding areas of need as rated by respondents teaching in elementary Japanese immersion programs were various. Although the greatest single concern was about inadequate teaching materials to teach subject areas in Japanese to American children, additional strong areas of concern included limited availability of suitable teacher training courses, limited availability of qualified teachers for programs and limited state funding available to support Japanese language immersion schools.

The development, implementation and evaluation of the first year of a three-year pilot project to teach Japanese to all students K-5 at a Pittsburgh elementary school was was described by Donato, Antonek and Tucker (1994). End of year information was collected from the Japanese teacher and other teachers in the school, as well as from students and parents. Results of students' oral interviews indicated a range of proficiency development along the novice continuum, and indications were that an earlier start may result in more uniform gains for the majority of learners. The

teacher of the program indicated concerns about marginalization of the Japanese language within the larger school setting.

The effort to develop national standards in Japanese has come about as part of the national standards development movement in other school subject matter. National standards, defining the levels students are expected to meet in subject matter, is a project sponsored by the federal government and private foundations (Doyle, 1991). In large part project momentum is in response to American students' low educational performance compared to that of students in other countries. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has spearheaded the effort to develop national standards for foreign languages, K-12. In April 1995, a group of 26 selected Japanese language teachers along with administrators of Japanese language programs met to examine the draft for national standards in Japanese. The task force report stated that so little is currently known about Japanese language instruction in elementary schools that it would not address this area until more data were available (Kataoka, 1995).

Most recently, the Laurasian Institution has published A Field Survey of U.S. Precollegiate Japanese Language Programs (1996) the principal purpose of which is to provide an up-to-date and comprehensive overview of the basic conditions in which precollegiate teachers of Japanese (including Japanese language teachers in elementary schools) work. The findings reveal some of the pressing and fundamental challenges faced in Japanese language instruction, including lack of opportunities for teacher training and networking.

A National Survey of Foreign Language Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools A Changing Picture: 1987-1997 is a notable project conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Among the findings from this replication of

the landmark 1987 survey is that along with increases of Japanese language instruction at the secondary level within the United States, up 7% to 9%, reports of Japanese at the elementary level increased 0% to 3%. As part of this survey effort, CAL has compiled a national directory of early language programs, including Japanese, which not only enhances the visibility of these programs, but also provides support for networking and information sharing.

Data collected during 1996 as subscription information for Satori,[1] a publication directed at Japanese language teachers in the elementary schools, conceived and edited by this researcher, provides a profile of 61 subscribers who identify themselves as teachers of Japanese in elementary schools from 19 states including Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, and Virginia. All indications are that the programs in which these teachers define their circumstances vary greatly. Little consistency exists in the number of days per week that the Japanese language teachers instruct, or the amounts of time per class period. The numbers of students in each class and the number of years the Japanese programs have been on-going also varied greatly. Some teachers reported that they were just beginning to teach Japanese in brand new programs while others reported they were instructing in programs that had been up and running for several years. Some teachers work in magnet schools, but most do not. Some teachers who answered that they teach Japanese in grades K-5 also listed that they teach in grades 6 or higher. A very few teach in high school as well as elementary school. Many teachers work in programs begun under the aegis of foreign language in the

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[1]satori |sä' tô rê| n-s [Jap]: sudden enlightenment and a state of consciousness attained by intuitive illumination representing the spiritual goal of Zen Buddhism (Webster's, 1986).

elementary schools (FLES). These FLES programs, though often conceived and implemented modeling earlier such programs in French and Spanish, are unique in that the instruction is delivered in a less commonly taught (LCT) language.

Japanese language teachers in the early grades come from diverse backgrounds and teach in varying settings. Yet one variable subtly arises throughout the limited literature focusing on this area. Within a field so novel and unsettled, teachers having taught Japanese in early grades for more than just a few years often are regarded as "successful" teachers. They are conferred this term by default. There exists no pool of more experienced teachers of Japanese language, at this level, to look to. The very fact that these teachers have been able to sustain their teaching in this novel area of language instruction, to successfully endure, is itself an essential characteristic. A consistent, continued record of teaching in the field of Japanese at the elementary school level, in many cases as the sole teacher in a program, confers to them the title of "veteran" teacher. But can the claim "expert" also be conferred upon them? For the purpose in this study, the answer is "yes." Their span of service in Japanese based on the criteria for this study places them in a unique cohort. Experienced individuals in this field, at this level, are still relatively rare. The researcher estimates their number to be fewer than fifty such persons in the year of this study. Through an examination of their lives in relation to the field of early Japanese language in the United States insight and understanding can be gained.

Being able "to apply knowledge appropriately to new situations" is the criterion that Gardner (1991) requires for granting the appellation "disciplinary expert." This masterer of concepts and skills of a discipline or domain, at any age, is not limited to "the usual text-and-test taking setting." Rather, these persons are in "the ranks of those who really understand" (Gardner, 1991). It should follow then that locating

teachers in programs of Japanese language in the elementary schools, who have taught in them for relatively longer periods of time, and who are currently teaching, is a first step in locating experts in this field, at this level.

Numbers of students and types of schools, levels and numbers of Japanese lessons delivered per week along with amounts of time devoted to the subject may all vary. It is uncommon to find a truly experienced teacher of Japanese in the early grades, for at the time of this study, individuals who have taught Japanese for more than three or four years to younger children are few and far between. The characteristics and experiences that these experienced teachers share, along with the differences among them, provide clues to understanding. Investigating this novel area of foreign language instruction in the U.S. prompts the research question, "What essential characteristics are common to veteran Japanese language teachers of early Japanese language programs?"

Japanese language programs in the early grades can be "slippery fish." Casting out a "net" for information often yields a surprising and disappointing catch. Over the past decade programs have been implemented, have endured for a few years, and then have vanished. A March, 1997, phone call to the Washington State Foreign Language consultant revealed that every one of the 11 programs of Japanese in elementary schools listed in the 1991 Directory of U.S. Elementary and Secondary Schools Teaching Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian has been discontinued. Currently, no elementary programs exist in the state of Washington. Yet in the bordering state of Oregon, Japanese in the elementary schools flourishes with well over twenty programs documented and ongoing.

In the early 1990s in North Carolina, at least three Japanese programs in the elementary schools were implemented in the school districts of Greensboro, Rocky

Mount and Nash counties. Those three programs are now dismantled. Nevertheless, new programs continue to emerge. During the 1996-97 school year, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, school district, largest in the state, implemented a Japanese immersion program to complement their already established Spanish, German and French immersion programs. In nearby South Carolina and Georgia, efforts to implement and expand offerings in Japanese language have included new programs in the elementary schools in recent years.

The renaissance of FLES programs in the 1980s refueled the interest in research in the area of early language study for elementary school age children. Attempts to denote characteristics of effective elementary second language teachers, without regard to the specific language taught, evolves out of historical accounts of FLES programs within the United States. Modern FLES programs are dated from those begun in Cleveland, Ohio in 1918. The field received a tremendous boost some 40 years later, when in the late 1950s, significant funds became available as a result of the National Defense in Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, a nearly immediate Federal legislative reaction to the Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957. One provision of the Act provided funds both for teacher training in critical languages and instructional equipment for foreign language programs. But even with the best of intentions, many FLES programs were implemented with inadequate planning or without commitment of adequate resources (Heining-Boynton, 1991).

An erosion of FLES programs occurred rapidly across the U.S. by the mid-1960s. Budgetary constraints were among the most common reasons given for the demise of programs, yet there were also other reasons (Curtain & Pesola, 1994). Real and perceived goals were not being met. Students participating in programs, as well as some parents and administrators, felt that verbal communication in the target

language should be an immediate outcome. Such instant proficiency, however, was not the case. The "silent period," sometimes lasting for a period of up to six months or longer is now a well-researched phenomenon in the second language learning of children.

Spaar (1968) researched the retrospective perceptions and attitudes of students who had participated in FLES programs during the early 1960s. Her work points to an extremely limited knowledge base, scarcity of materials and lack of instructional variety.

Researcher consensus (Curtain & Pesola, 1994) holds that FLES failed in the decade of the '50s and '60s due to a host of reasons, many of which directly involved the selection and training of the teachers. Other problems centered around goals, program models, support from secondary teachers, articulation to upper grade levels, isolation, lack of short and long range planning and inadequate program evaluation.

Subsequent research regarding FLES has focused primarily on the student and the benefits of early language programs. Heining-Boynton (1991) developed the FLES Program Evaluation Inventory (FPEI) in response to the current trend of rapid FLES program implementation. Utilizing a standardized format, its purpose is to document, describe and rate FLES programs and to assist in reporting, analyzing and comparing conditions. The FPEI involves teachers, students, administrators/principals and parents in rating their programs on one of four forms developed for each group. The questions utilized in the survey were based on research of FLES programs in the '50s and '60s, as well as the concerns of contemporary FLES teachers.

The field of Japanese language instruction in elementary schools in the United States is for this researcher an intriguing and personal subject, and the logical culmination to my work and formal academic life to date. As I enter my twentieth year of work involved in second language education, this research has allowed me to

analyze what I have learned and experienced in developing and implementing second language programs. Particularly at the elementary level, I have participated in introducing programs of foreign language for young children in schools where they had never before existed. What others have experienced personally and described to me concerning the process of second language acquisition for children has focused my interest. My involvement in the implementation of two different and massive foreign language programs now involving well over 100,000 elementary-age children in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) during the decade of the 1980s and 1990s has been significant to my interest.

Methodology

Yin (1989) suggests that research strategy should be based on three conditions: 1) the type of research question, 2) the control the investigator has over the actual behavioral events, and 3) the focus on contemporary, as opposed to historical, phenomena. A "what" question, such as "what essential characteristics are common to veteran Japanese language teachers of early Japanese language programs?" posed in this study, is basically exploratory. As such it supports a justifiable rationale for conducting an exploratory case study, when utilized within a basic "who, what, where, how and why" schema for characterizing research questions (Yin, 1989).

Case study is understood as empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident and when multiple sources of evidence are used. Case study is often indicated as a research strategy when the extent of control over behavioral events is negligible and the degree of focus is on contemporary events such as is proposed in this study.

Criticisms of case study identified by Yin (1989) are that they

1) take too long (my experience has been that they are time intensive),

2) lack "rigor" (my experience suggests that it takes time to create "rigor"), and

3) provide little scientific basis for generalization.

Yin addresses this third criticism, stating that "case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions but not to populations or universes." Single case studies, like single experiments, do not establish scientific fact. Instead, scientific fact relies on multiple experiments replicating the same phenomenon under different conditions. Case study, like an experiment, does not represent a sample. The investigator's goal is to expand and generalize theories and not to enumerate frequencies.

Within the various methods of the case study genre, the biographical method or the "studied use and collection of personal life documents, stories, accounts and narratives which describe turning-point moments in individuals' lives (McCracken, 1988) demonstrates the focus and flexibility needed to acquire data regarding teachers in early Japanese language programs.

"The subject matter of the biographical method . . . is the life experiences of a person" and the observation of a life, when written by another person is called a biography (Denzin, 1989). The biographical method depends on two ways of knowing. Subjective knowing, drawn from personal experience or personal experience of others, is one way of knowing. It is balanced by intersubjective knowing dependent on the shared experience and knowledge gained from having participated in common experience with another person. The interpretation or act of making sense of the experiences dealt with through the biographical method leads to understanding.

This "bottom up" understanding and consequent development of theory (as opposed to a "top down" data search to prove or disprove hypotheses) through the collection of various pieces of interconnected data is known as grounded theory (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). Instead of puzzling together the bits of evidence to complete an already known picture, the picture is in the beginning unknown and is constructed as parts are examined and fashioned together. Investigation always proceeds from science to conjecture. Science is the formal way of thinking and classifying what is seen, a method of relating the known to what one wishes to know. For this method of inquiry, part of the study is directed at discovering the important questions.

Biographical method further locates within the broader subject of history, a field which has been termed the "study of causes" and "progress through the transmission of acquired skill from one generation to the next" (Carr, 1961). Yet the biography may also include two sources of evidence not always available to a purely historical approach–namely, systematic interviewing and direct observation.

Research Design

Research design has been compared to a blueprint when used as the plan for putting together, organizing, and integrating data (Merriam, 1988). The blueprint is determined by the shape of the problem, its questions, and the product desired as the end result. The underlying belief is that the research design is the logical sequence connecting empirical data to the study's initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions. Denzin (1989) suggests that one's method is one's way of knowing. Determining what questions one will ask, to whom and for what purpose is the critical strategy for knowing about a phenomenon and is the essence of research design (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

In this study, case biography, focusing on the lives of veteran teachers of Japanese in early language programs, is the method. A structured, face-to-face interview conducted with five veteran teachers of Japanese language in elementary schools is the major data collection strategy. Two of the teachers instruct in early Japanese language programs on the East coast and three of the teachers instruct in an early Japanese language program on the West coast. Comparing and contrasting data collected through the systematic, face-to-face interviews and analyzing data for consistencies and deviations has been the key strategy for interpretation of data. The interpreted data is presented in a narrative style in this document.

Site selection. Because most programs of Japanese at the elementary school level have been in existence for five years or less ("Japanese language learning," 1996), veteran teachers are defined in this study as persons currently instructing Japanese at the K-5 level and having instructed at this level for five or more years. Criteria for inclusion in this study then are: 1) currently teaching in an early Japanese language program, and 2) teaching experience of five or more years, full or part-time in an early Japanese language program.

The Japanese language teachers interviewed for this study represent three elementary schools within two public school districts in the United States (two elementary schools in Raleigh, North Carolina, representing the Wake County Public School District, and one elementary school in San Francisco, California, representing the San Francisco Unified School District). The sample is a convenience sample. The teachers have been chosen from programs with which the the researcher has had on-going involvement for the past six years or longer. The two East coast teachers instruct at two different elementary schools in Raleigh, within the school district in which

the researcher currently works. The Japanese language program of this school district has been documented earlier by Heining-Boynton and Hart (1991).

In the year that the interviews were conducted (1997) the two teachers in North Carolina were the only Japanese language teachers in the state located by the researcher who met the criteria established to be included in the sample. The only other teachers of Japanese in the elementary schools who were located in North Carolina were employed as first year teachers in grades K-1 in the newly created Charlotte-Mecklenburg Japanese immersion program begun in 1996.

The three West coast teachers instruct at Clarendon Alternative Bilingual School in San Francisco. The program has been well-documented by the school's principal, Choy (1994). Teachers interviewed were selected with the help of Dr. Choy using the criteria specified for inclusion into the sample. This researcher has made a number visits to the school since 1993, and has observed in the Japanese language classrooms there. When the interviews were conducted in 1997 only two other early Japanese language programs were located by the researcher in public schools in California, all within the Los Angeles area, that had been on-going for more than five years. The researcher estimates that the entire number of teachers to meet the criteria stated to be included within the study to be fewer than 10 teachers in the entire state of California.

The interview process. Topical interviewing, used to construct a coherent narrative to explain situations and outcomes, characterizes the strategy utilized for conducting interviews. This type of interviewing requires a good deal of preliminary background work, including the examination of existing documents and materials (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Questions were asked of the interviewees utilizing a structured interview format in order to design flexibility into the interview questions while

maintaining control of the direction and topic. The interview guide (Appendix A) was fashioned guided by the work of Rubin and Rubin (1995), McCracken (1988) and Denzin (1988) with regard to form and content, and the work of Heining-Boynton (1991) regarding questions concerning historical and contemporary issues surrounding the field of foreign language in the elementary schools. The guide controlled for consistency in questioning of subjects while at the same time offering flexibility to follow lines of discussion pertinent to the topic.

The interview guide was organized around six major sections. The initial section of the interview guide elicited biographical information as suggested by McCracken (1988) to allow the interviewer to gather descriptive details of an individual's life. Collecting this information at the beginning of the interview informed the interviewer of the context of the interviewee's life, and made certain that this biographical data was at hand during data analysis. The other five sections included education and training, work experience, instructional strategy, general questions derived from historical and contemporary issues of foreign language instruction, and involvement in organizations and staff development.

Three types of questions utilized--main questions, probes and follow-up questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995)–make the general questioning strategy. Main questions directed the discussion, with wording broad enough to allow the interviewee to express her own opinions, but narrow enough to keep the interviewee on track. "Tell me about your educational background" or "How did you begin teaching Japanese" are examples of main questions. Probes, questions that helped specify the depth of exploration wanted, encouraged the interviewee to finish up on particular topics and indicated that the interviewer was paying attention. "Was the school you attended in Japan public or private?" and "Do your own children speak Japanese?" are examples of

probe questions that directed the interviewee's focus and yet affirmed the process. Follow-up questions were developed either during the initial interview or later as a means of coming back to the interviewee for further clarification. Questions such as "Can you remember how many children you taught that first year?" or " Can you give me an example of how Japanese language might be viewed as difficult for English speaking children?" are examples of follow-up questions that both filled in the details in the interview yet systematically personalized process. A final close-down question, "Is there anything about teaching Japanese to young children that I haven't asked that you think I should know?" gave participants an opportunity to give input not elicited through the guide, repair or correct earlier statements, and understand that the interview was winding down.

Construction of Teaching Biographies

The biographical narratives developed from the structured interviews are the result of coding and interpreting a large amount of data. Interviewees were audio-taped and then the audio tapes were transcribed. The written records of the five interviews were then coded for themes by the method described by Rubin and Rubin (1988). This method allows for the discovery, identification and marking of underlying ideas in the data. Systematic searching and arranging of interview transcripts and other pertinent materials gathered is conducted to increase personal understanding and to prepare this understanding for the presentation to others. Similar ideas are then grouped together.

Final data analysis was achieved by placing into one category all the material addressing a single theme. First, material within categories was compared to look for shadings of meaning and differences. Next, material was compared across categories to uncover connections between and among themes.

The sequence of the stories chosen for presentation is particularly relevant to this study. Data collection began close to the researcher's own personal work and experiences in the area with Yoshiko, the Japanese teacher with whom this researcher has had the longest professional relationship. Denzin (1989) claims that in writing a biography, the author writes himself into the life of the subject. The investigator/author is in fact an instrument for data collection and must utilize a broad range of personal experience and skills, not only to locate and elicit data but also to match patterns discerned in the data. This first person account of a phenomenon that has never before been studied suggests the need for first person narration. From this point on through the document the researcher's/narrator's perspective will be presented as "I."

Yoshiko's classes, in my own school district, were the first Japanese classes for elementary school children that I had ever visited. For the past 16 years I have periodically observed in Yoshiko's classes. Yoshiko worked with me in developing and conducting a preliminary interview to get practice in the process and experiment with the strategy some months before the formal interview process began. I interviewed her a second time utilizing the protocol developed from that initial interview experience, and then proceeded to interview the other four teachers. The data gathered from the two interviews with Yoshiko, back to back yet several months apart, allowed me to cross check information gained earlier. Yoshiko's thoughts, ideas and insights have helped me to refine my understandings. Her concerns have led me to develop additional questions that I would have otherwise overlooked.

Misako, whom I have known for nearly 9 years and in whose classes I have also observed periodically, is the second narrative in the series. As a Japanese teacher in the same school district in which Yoshiko teaches, she has provided

information for my first basis of comparison between two Japanese teachers, both within my own school district and the programs in which they instruct.

Kazuko, Sumako, and Devi from Clarendon Alternative Bilingual School in San Francisco, California were selected for me to interview by their principal Dr. Kanani Choy. The selection was based on the criteria submitted to Dr. Choy of 1) five years teaching Japanese at the elementary school level, and 2) currently teaching Japanese at the elementary level. I conducted the interviews with the three teachers over a two-day period during a visit in spring of 1997.

Earlier I had observed in Kazuko's class during a visit in 1993 while doing preliminary research for this study. Although I did not readily realize that she was to be one of my subjects, I was surprised and pleased to recognize her when I entered her classroom. I had retained very vivid and positive memories of my visit to her classroom several years before.

At first Sumako and I could not recollect having met before. But as the interview continued I realized that I had met her at the same time I had met Dr. Kanani Choy, the principal, at an Advocates for Language Learning (ALL) conference In Kansas City in late 1993. She along with Kanani were making a presentation about the Japanese program at Clarendon Elementary, a presentation I attended and my first introduction to the school.

Devi and I had met in the company of Kanani again while attending an ALL Conference in the Los Angeles area in 1995. One of the highlights of this conference was field trips to several elementary Japanese programs in the area, and I toured these schools in the company of the Clarendon group.

A draft of the dissertation document was forwarded to each of the interviewees. The Japanese teachers were encouraged to review the chapter developed from the

transcript of their own interview and to provide feedback. This review by informants helped scrutinize for historical and substantive accuracy, correct words and their spelling, particularly for those of Japanese origin, and congruence of meaning. Feedback received was considered and addressed in the final document.

The narratives of all five teachers are additionally presented in the order that the interviews were conducted. This sequence of presentation is important for it was through this order of progressive interviewing, preliminary analysis and understanding that I was able to develop initial comparisons. I began comparisons first between teachers, as in the case of Yoshiko and Misako, and then among teachers as new data were analyzed and integrated into the mix.

Settings, Entry, and Access

The two school districts in which the teachers interviewed instruct can be said to have precursor programs. That is, programs in these districts are among the first of such programs to be implemented within the United States. The continuous nature of these programs is unique within the U.S. The program in San Francisco out ranks most other early Japanese language programs in the United States by nearly a decade. The San Francisco Unified School District began its Japanese program at Clarendon Elementary School in 1973; the Wake County Public School System began its programs at Wiley International Magnet School and Poe International Magnet School nine years later in 1982. An understanding of the teachers instructing within these programs brings understanding of the implementation and maintenance of these programs themselves, as well as a providing insight into the field of early Japanese language instruction and programs within the United States. Interviews were conducted on site in the two school districts in Raleigh and San Francisco. The

following profile of the district settings within which the teachers interviewed instruct is helpful to understanding the context of their work as well as my own point of view.

Raleigh, North Carolina. The "Triangle" area has been my home base in N.C. since I first attended the University of North Carolina in 1969. My initial employment in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) in Raleigh, North Carolina, began as project director in December 1980 for a Title VII Bilingual Grant. The demise, under considerable controversy, of the then current superintendent (Dr. John Murphy, now an educational consultant in Florida) the month after I started work there foreshadowed the political climate of the school district. The subsequent hiring some months later of Dr. Walter Marks as superintendent (who three years later would resign under extreme controversy, some aspects of which questioned the use of federal funds, including Title VII, to implement new magnet school programs) was the shadow under which I worked within the WCPSS ESL program for a number of years. After departing Raleigh he continued controversial stints in a number of other school districts, including Richmond School District outside San Francisco, where later he gained national notoriety when he was accused of bankrupting that school system), my beginning association with the Wake County Public Schools was, to say the least, interesting.

The school system's geographical administrative area, the result of the merger of Raleigh city and Wake county schools in 1976, is 864 square miles. In the early '80s the system claimed to be 48th largest in the United States in terms of student population; now that claim is 37th, fueled by explosive growth of the entire Research Triangle area of Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. It is now normal for the school system to grow by 4,000 students yearly, opening four or five new schools annually to serve them.

The schools had begun integration in the early seventies, and now faced, in the beginning of the '80s, a dilemma. Expansive growth in the suburbs, outside the downtown area, left older, yet still viable inner city school buildings under utilized and with mostly black students, while the building of new schools located in areas of population growth was creating a tremendous financial strain.

Begun under School Superintendent John Murphy and fully operationalized under his successor, School Superintendent Walter Marks, the district embarked on a plan to create a system of magnet schools, a novel and essentially untried concept at that time. Several varying program types designed to attract majority (white) kids to the city center. One type of program, referred to as the Gifted and Talented Magnet, would initially be implemented in 18 schools and would offer electives in French and Spanish to kindergarten through fifth graders.

An additional two elementary schools were planned as International Magnets, housing the English as a second language programs for the county at the elementary level and offering instruction in several other languages in addition to French and Spanish. It is from these two original International Magnets that the two east coast Japanese teachers interviewed have been drawn. Both met the established criteria for selection: 1) five years teaching Japanese in an elementary school, and 2) currently teaching in a program of Japanese at the elementary level. Invoking this criteria identifies them as the only Japanese teachers in elementary schools in North Carolina to emerge.

Misako, the first teacher in this series of interviews, originally came to work for the WCPSS through Triangle International Language Center (later the name changed to Dialogos), a privately owned, local language company which provided foreign language instructional services for the school district. The company was a language

brokerage firm, locating instructors who were considered qualified, although not necessarily certified, to instruct. In fact, certification in Japanese, Chinese and most other languages was rarely an issue in North Carolina in 1982, for no schools there were teaching languages other than French, Spanish, German, or Latin. WCPSS was the first school district for which the company had provided services. It was also one of the first documented incidences of a public school district contracting with a private company to provide instruction.

The relationship between the school system and the company was, at best, awkward. I was the administrator who was charged with initially facilitating entry into the contract, maintaining the contract, and then 11 years later, discontinuing the use of contracted services. At that time, when the school system sought to become independent of the foreign language contract, several foreign language instructors supplied through the contract were so popular that, ironically, the school system bought the right to hire independently six of these instructors. Misako was one of these teachers; she taught Japanese at Poe Elementary International Magnet School.

Yoshiko, the other East Coast, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Wake County Public Schools' Japanese instructor actually began as the original teacher in 1982 of the Japanese program at Wiley Elementary International Magnet School, the other elementary school of this program type. She has been teaching Japanese there ever since. It is from my early relationship with her that I first began to question and understand what is involved in such programs.

San Francisco, California. I flew out to San Francisco on a late spring weekend before my scheduled interviews on the following Monday and Tuesday. I love visiting the City and have wonderful memories since my first visit there in 1973 in a Volkswagen van cross country trip, when gasoline was still less than 30 cents a gallon.

The extra time on the front end of this visit allowed me to prolong my stay with Ken, my college roommate from undergraduate days and enduring friend. He had moved to San Francisco in 1976 and luckily for me he now lives only minutes from the school from which I've drawn the west coast Japanese teachers.

Ken's house, my usual base of operation on the West Coast, is at 1380 Clayton, in the Twin Peaks area, about a 10 minute drive or 35 minute walk to the school. Depending on the season, the air along the route is fragrant with scent of dried grasses, florist-shop smelling eucalyptus, bracing Pacific breezes and exhaust of heavy traffic.

A backward glance on downtown San Francisco and the Bay as one ascends Market Street toward the Sutro Tower area offers vistas that breath take and exhilarate (unless a fog bank has rolled in). It's a classic view of the city--the financial district, the Bay Bridge (the one that broke in the '91 earthquake) spanning the waters across to Oakland and Berkley, and east to the San Francisco International Airport. Higher still, one must proceed to the top of Twin Peaks for views of the Pacific, the Golden Gate Bridge, and north to Sasaulito. I have amazed at this sight on many occasions but always remember an incredibly clear Halloween night some years ago, arriving on I-280 from the airport, up what we call " the back way." The city asparkle and aglow, the marine's watery environs atwinkle from reflected full moon and ghostly illuminated skyscrapers, Golden Gate and Bay Bridges festooned with points of light, marking off the boundaries their various waters. So exquisitely, so gloriously yet so sadly beautiful is the vista and my memory of it. So many dramas have played out in the city since I have come to know it--earthquake, epidemic, assassination.

To the top and over, then down just a little ways, and descending the backside of the hill supporting Sutro Tower, south of, yet elevated above the downtown area of

San Francisco lie quieter, terraced neighborhoods of charmingly landscaped bungalows. Clarendon Elementary School, from which teachers are chosen for this study, straddles a little hillside and nestles within the foliage. It nearly stands in the backside shadow of Sutro Tower, that Golden Gate colored multi-media structure, the scale of which is so large as to drawf any structures immediately surrounding. The school building itself is contemporary, modular-appearing and flat-roofed with much glass and neutral gray exterior. It almost looks as if it might have naturally sprouted there, so gracefully it inhabits the contours of the hillside.

Arriving at the school I check in at the office to say my "hellos" touching base with the principal, Dr. Kanani Choy. I met Kanani, who was born in Hawaii, at a Japanese language session at a foreign language conference in 1992. Over the years I have gravitated toward her and this school and we've discovered several things in common. We're the same age, both held Title VII Fellowships, and Kanani's dissertation topic dealt with the Japanese program at her school. She encourages me, reminding me of what her chairman reminded her, "Its not your best work, it's your first work. Get it done." We've been lunch partners at numerous Japan Foundation Luncheons held during ACTFL, usually winning something in the quintessential door prize drawing, yet never the two round-trip business class tickets to Japan. We've coffeed and talked at various conferences. And when at her school, she always takes time for me, surrounded by her stacks of papers, teachers and parents, in and out, directing her attentions here and there, the way it always is at one's own work. And always, she gives me the run of the school. After checking in at the school office to say "hello" and to pick up my schedule of interviews for the next two days, I head out to visit in the children's classes before the school day lets out and before I commence the interviews.

The selection of three West Coast teachers of Japanese at the elementary level was made for me by Kanani from teachers within her school, based on the criteria of: 1) five years teaching in an elementary program of Japanese language, and 2) currently teaching in such a program.

A description of the school and Japanese program prepared for a 1994 newsletter edition of Satori, describes Clarendon as the only two-way Japanese bilingual program in the United States.

> Located in San Francisco, California, the Japanese School is actually a school within a school and has approximately 300 students who study Japanese in 10 classes, grades K-5. The student population is approximately 33% native Japanese, 33% Japanese-American or biracial and 33% other ethnic. Classroom teachers in the school and have bilingual training as well as ESL training. The Japanese curriculum is mainly taught by native Japanese speaking paraprofessionals (sensei).
>
> The program was founded in 1973 by the Japanese Speaking Society of America and Japanese Community Services to provide a first rate education for the children of San Francisco that would include learning about the cultural heritage of Japan. The program now serves children from all over the city who are interested in studying another language and culture along with the regular school curriculum. The school is based on a two-way bilingual model. Some of the children are learning English as a second language and some of the children are learning Japanese. Each child receives a minimum of 30 minutes of Japanese instruction per day.
>
> Funds for the program have varied over the past 20 years of its existence. Originally fully funded by Title VII (full-time Japanese speaking senseis), the school now relies on State LEP/NEP (limited English proficient and non-English proficient) funds as well as funds brought in through parent fund-raising activities in order to maintain half-time senseis. Parents raise as much as $50,000 yearly.

In successive years, costs have risen. An information sheet that I picked up in June 1997 reports that parents are now raising nearly $80,000 yearly.

It makes sense that the first documented and continuous public school program of Japanese language instruction in an elementary school in the United States would emerge and flourish in San Francisco. The Japanese language has never been widely used nor studied in the United States. The reason is apparent. Few

Japanese in the United States required little need for the language here. The island was closed to the outside world from the seventeenth until the middle of the nineteenth century by political forces within the island nation. This national seclusion came about as the suspicion grew of the newly introduced Christianity and its negative effects on a feudal society. Regulation of foreign trade, with Japanese nationals forbidden to travel abroad or return home from overseas under sentence of death, underscored the fervent intent of this embargo. Only the Dutch and Chinese were allowed to trade at Nagasaki. The isolation was broken in 1853 by Commodore Perry, but at a time when our own country was on the brink of internal strife, thus further slowing down trade and cultural exchange.

As situated geographically, Japan is closest to the part of the continental United States explored and pioneered in the western expansion of the United States. But when the Japanese did begin settling in the continental United States, they began settling in California and the West Coast, bringing with them their language and culture.

Overview

The balance of this document is organized according to the following plan. Each chapter begins with a narrative developed from the interviews of each of the five Japanese language teachers in the elementary schools. The five individual narratives are entitled "stories." The narrative or storytelling form gives the story of what each person views as significant points in her life (Denzin, 1989). The format followed speaks to the interviewee's early life (Beginnings), factors influencing the interviewee's immigration to the United States (Coming to America), factors that influenced the interviewee to begin teaching Japanese in the elementary schools (Turning Point/Becoming a Teacher of Japanese in the Elementary Schools). Following each

narrative is a section (Illuminations) discussing questions, evidence, and data that guides the reader through the steps of my own mental analysis.

The final chapter of the document presents findings and conclusions, profiling the five teachers interviewed. Discussion is continued centering on pertinent questions and issues that arose from an analysis of the data. A summary and implications for further research are given.

CHAPTER 2
YOSHIKO'S STORY

Beginnings

Growing up in Japan during the decade immediately following the second world war, Yoshiko did not plan to become a teacher, much less a teacher of Japanese language in the United States. Indeed, at the time of her birth in 1945, Japanese was not a foreign language commonly taught in any American secondary school that offered foreign languages, and was non-existent in the very few documented elementary schools offering foreign language instruction.

In late 1944 Yoshiko's family relocated from Tokyo to Chiba, her mother's hometown several hours by train outside the capital city. Being pregnant with Yoshiko, her mother and the family felt it too dangerous to remain in Tokyo as the war wound down. Yoshiko was born in Chiba and remained there until the family moved back to Tokyo at the war's end.

Yoshiko describes growing up in her family in post-war Japan as typical for that era and place. From elementary school onward, Yoshiko developed a particular interest in English. The Japanese educational system had been reformed considerably following the second world war as part of the reconstruction efforts, with required English study offered to Japanese students in junior high. However, Yoshiko's elementary school began phasing in English language classes in upper grades, so she was able to begin her study even earlier than normal and continue through the junior high and high school levels. After graduation she went on to study English at a private

language school and later majored in English at the business college she attended. Yoshiko was in preparation to become a Japanese business woman.

Upon graduating from college, Yoshiko secured a job with an English language record company that sold records for language study. She started as a saleswoman, demonstrating the use of the language records and instructional materials. Although sales were mainly for English language records, other languages were also available. Yoshiko was later assigned to the international division of the company, still in Tokyo, where her tasks included making appointments and arranging facilities for meetings. Later still she moved to a job with the Hilton International Reservation service, making reservations for clients both in Japanese and English.

Yoshiko was introduced to Walter Johnson, an American from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, while he was a visiting college student studying in Tokyo in the '60s. His stay extended in Japan with his and Yoshiko's newfound relationship. He continued on in his studies for a masters degree in Japan, and he and Yoshiko were married there in the chapel of his university.

Coming to America

In 1978, while still in Japan with Yoshiko, Walter Johnson was hired as a liaison to Japan for the state of North Carolina. The state's governor, James Hunt, was placing special emphasis on the relationship between North Carolina and Japan to enhance both trade and cultural relations. Yoshiko and Walter returned to the United States and to his home in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. A year later they moved to Cary, at the time a bedroom community adjacent to the state capital of Raleigh where the North Carolina Japan Center is located. This put Mr. Johnson closer to the North

Carolina government and business contacts he needed for his job. He made numerous trips between North Carolina and Japan at this time.

Yoshiko's first job in a public school came about after the move to Cary from Winston-Salem. As she explains it, her younger children were now in kindergarten and she was becoming a little bored staying in the apartment all day. So she would visit classes at her childrens' school as a volunteer, telling about Japan and demonstrating origami and other traditional Japanese arts. She developed a friendship with one of her daughter's teachers at the school. One day the teacher related that in the coming school year she would be teaching a handicapped child requiring an individual assistant in the classroom. Would Yoshiko be interested in the assistant's job? Yes, Yoshiko thought; she might be. So during the next year Yoshiko attended to the student during school hours.

Turning Point: Becoming a Teacher of Japanese

During that year several occurrences began shaping an opportunity for Yoshiko that would eventually lead to her current role in Japanese language education. The North Carolina governor's Japanese initiatives had begun paying off and a number of Japanese businesses were locating in North Carolina and the Raleigh area, bringing in Japanese families that sent their children to public school. In response to these new students the school system's central administration began scouting for a Japanese/English tutor to work with the children in the English as a second language program. And the handicapped child was growing and becoming heavier, making it more difficult for Yoshiko to handle her. It was as this point in my interview with Yoshiko that she reminded me of how our own lives had intersected and of what had been my initial role in her teaching of Japanese.

Tim: Now tell me, when did you first start teaching Japanese and how?

Yoshiko: That was 1982, right? Is it right?

Tim: The magnet schools started in 1982.

Yoshiko: In that time I have two schools. Everyday, you know, between Enloe (magnet high school) and Wiley (magnet elementary school).

Tim: You taught at Enloe High School? I forgot.

Yoshiko: (In excited voice) I'm the first teacher.

Tim: Ah Yoshiko, you've got to help, ok,you've got to help me remember. It's been a while, its been so . . .

Yoshiko: Ok. I hope I always remember.

Tim: You know, I always remember you, (but) I can't remember how things started.

Yoshiko: You came, I think I remember, before the magnet system started. You came to ask me to write curriculum for Japanese elementary through high school. So I wrote it. And then, you know September, Enloe and then Wiley started.

Yoshiko continues on, explaining that Japanese was not then a full daily schedule of instruction and that this necessitated that she supplement Japanese teaching by being an English as a second language (ESL) aide for the Japanese and other limited English proficient children.

Yoshiko: . . . so one (Japanese) class the first five years. I think one class. The rest of the classes I was teaching ESL. And then every year, more students. So I finally got you know three (Japanese) classes. But you know the first year it was hard, because Wake County didn't give me any textbook.

Tim: Yea, I know, it was crazy.

Yoshiko: And especially high school. You know, I needed some book, but unfortunately they couldn't get me.

Tim: You had nothing . .

Yoshiko: So I worked every day until one o'clock or two o'clock a.m. and I stayed so exhausted that I finally had bad accident.

The automobile accident that occurred as Yoshiko was traveling between Enloe High School and Wiley Elementary school for her teaching assignments kept Yoshiko out of work for some weeks, threatening the program. Yoshiko then explains how the principal at Wiley Elementary at that time, Dr. Poole, recognized that the teaching along with the daily travel between the high school and elementary school was too stressful. Dr. Poole arranged for Yoshiko to remain solely at the elementary school after she recovered from the automobile accident.

I have followed the progress of the Japanese program at Wiley elementary school over the past 17 years and I have come to understand that it is basically Yoshiko's progress that I have been following. In those early years of her program, Yoshiko worked hard to develop interest in the Japanese classes, selling them to both parents and students of Wiley International Magnet School. Slowly at first, then more quickly in successive years, she built her program. Numbers of magnet children at Wiley, both black and white, became introduced to Japanese language and culture in Yoshiko's classes. As the years passed, as the ESL center program expanded to other schools throughout the district, Yoshiko became busy full-time with Japanese language instruction at Wiley, helping out only incidentally and informally with the ESL program when children of Japanese nationals had some special need or issue. She is the program.

I have discussed Japanese language education with Yoshiko on various occasions through the years, and she has helped me to understand the numerous challenges such a program faces. My understandings also come from my talks with parents of students taking Japanese there with Yoshiko, and reading what others have written about her.

An article in the *News and Observer* (November 11, 1985) entitled "Raleigh Children Learn to Speak, Read, Write Japanese" gives a feel for her teaching four years into the program:

> In a small classroom on the third floor of Wiley Elementary School, half a dozen children cheer when their teacher announces that they will learn a new letter that afternoon. The children busily copy the hook and vertical line taught from the Japanese phonetic character that is pronounced like the "e" in "these." When they are done, teacher Yoshiko K. Johnson draws a spiral in red on each student's paper--the equivalent to a star for excellence. Mrs. Johnson teachers four groups of kindergartners through fifth-graders at Wiley, the only elementary school in Wake county that offers Japanese language instruction and the only one that offers language classes four times a week. Her classroom is decorated with cranes folded from brightly patterned paper, and a large map of Japan adorns one wall. The windows, a mirror and the clock are all labeled with Japanese characters.
>
> Japanese is one of five languages offered at Wiley, one of two international magnet schools in Raleigh. The program is in its fourth year and began in part as a response to growing local interest in Japan, said Pearl S. Poole, Wiley principal.
>
> "All over Raleigh, there's an interest in Japan, and there are a lot of Japanese businesses here," Dr. Poole said in an interview on Wednesday.
>
> Japanese is not taught at any of Wake County middle schools, but is at Enloe High School. Such a gap in instruction doesn't mean the children's time is wasted if they study it during elementary school, Dr. Poole said.
>
> "I'm one who feels the earlier a child begins a foreign language, the better they pick it up," she said. Young children usually are not self-conscious about their pronunciation or the mistakes they may make, she said.
>
> Mrs. Johnson, a native of Tokyo who has lived in Raleigh for seven years, agreed that studying Japanese at an early age is advantageous. "Young kids have a good ear," she said, "and they don't have much of an accent." Adults, on the other hand often have more trouble learning the language, she said.

Eight years later in 1993 a *Herald Sun/Raleigh Extra* article continues describing Yoshiko's classroom:

> The students rose from their desks in a ritual as familiar as saying the Pledge of Allegiance and bowed simultaneously to their leader.
>
> "Johnson, sensei," they murmured, acknowledging their teacher.
>
> "Konnichi-wa," (good afternoon, how are you) they continued in unison.
>
> They sat down, then watched as Yoshiko Johnson began writing Japanese letters vertically down the center of the chalkboard. The intricate symbols flowed from her fingertips like melted butter. A tape clicked on and the students began chanting the words written on the board in time to the music.
>
> Johnson's American students at Wiley Elementary School in Raleigh are learning the Japanese language as early as kindergarten. In fact, Wake County has one of the oldest continuous Japanese language programs in the country.

> Is is possible for a student to study the language from kindergarten through 12th grade. In addition to Wiley, the program is offered at Poe Elementary. Carnage Middle and Enloe High Schools. There are also two beginner classes at Broughton High School this year.
>
> Johnson's classroom begs students to embrace the language. The days of the week are spelled out in Japanese above the chalkboard. There's a Japanese clock and calendar. Colorful figurines, maps and postcards of Japan are scattered throughout the room, and Japanese paper ornaments hang from the ceiling.
>
> Very little English is spoken here. Johnson, a native speaker of the Japanese language has been with the program since its inception 12 years ago.
>
> "The language always comes from the culture. Japanese is a behavior language," she said. "If someone's saying, 'How are you doing,' it depends on who you're talking to--your friend, your teacher or your boss."

Yoshiko's first formal, organized training in teaching the Japanese language came several years after she actually had begun her teaching assignment. A Japanese teacher of English in Japan was visiting North Carolina and she and Yoshiko met. The Japanese teacher related to Yoshiko the Japanese government's attempt to locate teachers of Japanese outside Japan in order to offer training. Yoshiko tracked down the information about the Japanese government effort, completed the application process, was selected, paid her own way back to Japan and completed the two week summer institute. "But unfortunately they were focusing on college students," she admits.

Yet her greatest animation comes when speaking of the Japanese assistants she has mentored through the Japanese Language Exchange Program (JALEX) for the past five years. Begun in 1992, the JALEX mission is to provide a framework for enhanced Japanese language instruction in the Unite States while providing classroom experience for native-Japanese engaged in Japanese as a foreign language study. A current American teacher of Japanese in the high schools connected Yoshiko to the JALEX organization. Although Yoshiko was hesitant at first because she knew that the JALEX program was focusing on high school, she applied and was accepted, believing

that any information could be helpful. The program included training for current teachers of Japanese in the United States, as well as placement of young (usually in their early twenties and female) Japanese as assistants in the selected school districts. Yoshiko says that when she first went to the JALEX training meeting several years ago she was the only elementary teacher present. But a year later the organization asked her to do a workshop for elementary schools having Japanese language programs, and several other elementary teachers attended that year.

Is it fair to say that having children of one's own must necessarily influence how one thinks, feels and acts with regard to teaching and learning? Yoshiko and her husband have reared three children--a twin boy and girl--now in their mid-twenties and a younger boy in his early twenties. When I asked Yoshiko "Do your children speak Japanese?" her answer was insightful.

Yoshiko: You know, it's funny. I never teach, we never teach English before we move here (United States), because my husband said, "You know, Yoshiko, you don't need to worry about, kids gonna be, you know, pick it up." So when they moved here, they have no idea, they don't even know "yes" or "no." But now they are Americans, they speak perfect English. Now they are losing Japanese, of course, because I only use Japanese to them, only in house. So only, always in, kind of same conversation.

Tim: And their reading and writing (Japanese), not so good?

Yoshiko: No, no, the boys cannot read and write, but they understand communication when I say in Japanese. But you know the daughter, she took Japanese in UNC . . . in Chapel Hill, so she can read and write, but she hates to write, especially, you know, kanji. It takes time . . . . Yea, its hard. But now, now she realize. The first time they don't want to speak another language when they were here. They don't want to hear the Japanese, especially in elementary. Now the atmosphere changed so they got into junior high school and started teaching culture. Now, "Wow, my mother Japanese, I know those culture." Now they started so proud of it and they talk to the friends, how to say stuff and then kids started being interested about my kids. Now they change, how do you say, their feelings.

Yoshiko elaborates, telling anecdotes about her childrens' graduation gift trip to Japan and their concerns about going. The younger boy was especially concerned about being in Japan and not being able to talk with or understand his grandmother.

Yoshiko: My mother's house is very old and you know the public baths in Japan. So my mother goes to the public bath and he hated because he had, you know, some kind, how you say . .

Tim: Embarrassment?

Yoshiko: Because the Americans, they don't, no way.

Tim: Yea, yea.

Yoshiko: "I have to take the bath with other guys, bunch of guys?" But not choice. So mother took my daughter and son to the public bath. He's big, he walks fast but my mother is short and slow, because getting old. You know he doesn't have much patience, he was always walking ahead of them. But every time he (came) to the corner he doesn't know which way . . so mother calling "Ok, turn to the left " in Japanese. You know, "hee DAH ree, mee GEE, mahs SOO goo." And every time he has to know, to hear the words and then he learns. Even now . . . yesterday I didn't have a car because my husband took, some reason. So he (son) came to pick me up. I supposed to go somewhere, but he did not know. So I have to . . . give directions and he say, "Momma, higari, migii?" So he still keeps those words.

Illuminations

In the decade and half that Yoshiko has taught Japanese to elementary age children, she has developed definite ideas about teaching the Japanese language and culture to American children. One important idea that comes through is that Japanese is a language different from English and other commonly taught languages in a number of ways, requiring its own specific set of teaching strategies. She touches on this point in our interview when speaking of the behavioral expectations of the language and has elaborated earlier in an article she authored for *Satori* (1995). She states that when she first began teaching Japanese in the elementary schools she had no where to turn.

There were no texts, no programs. She quickly came to understand that the techniques used to teach children in Japan would not generally work with American kids, and teaching small children Japanese was very different from teaching older students. Children needed movement. They learned best through play, games and songs. And because they were children and not adults, they needed first to learn "childrens' language" and the vocabulary of this language needed to be differentiated by gender in order for it to be authentic and natural. Yet, if the children were to continue in the language, a more formal language must also be taught. And Yoshiko realized that in most cases, hers was the only Japanese the children would hear. The children would seldom be exposed to any Japanese language beyond what she taught or arranged for them to hear. She believed that as a fourth category language, Japanese was more difficult for English speaking students than languages such as Spanish or French, and that many of the techniques typically used to teach these languages would just not work for Japanese.

Another important idea Yoshiko raises is that parents are most often uncertain as to what their expectations should be for their children studying the language.

Tim: Do you ever consider what parents says about their children?

Yoshiko: Oh, its a funny one, especially in the beginning, you know, student's parents. Because also I supposed to teach culture. Everything connects to the culture to teach language. So when I give back test results and then every year, one or two parents complain. "What happened my child? I thought my child was so, you know, enjoying and then have a great time. And when I look at test scores, always zero!" I say, "I don't think so. Your child is great in my class.

Then Yoshiko demonstrates for me the Japanese way of making a large spiraling circle on the paper to acclaim "great work." However, a check mark in Japanese traditionally means an incorrect answer. She demonstrates them to me by drawing them on my interview script.

Tim: It's exactly opposite.

Yoshiko: Opposite. See even in the Japanese language you are reversing when you make a sentence. It's funny.

The parents were interpreting and understanding the Japanese class through American eyes and their own school experiences. But it was an uninformed and incorrect interpretation.

Yet another important idea is Yoshiko's description of the difficulties encountered when she began the Japanese program over a decade and a half ago at Wiley elementary school--no program models, no materials, the very few students involved in Japanese requiring her to round out her duties and time teaching English as an second language aide and not being able to devote full time to teaching Japanese. It has certainly been a challenge and one that Yoshiko has met admirably if gauged by her own teaching and the duration of her program.

An ironic aspect of Yoshiko's involvement in Japanese language education is her current appointment for the past several years as a teacher in the Japanese Saturday School in Raleigh. It is to this school, established in the early '80s through the efforts of the Japanese community located in the area, that Japanese nationals on a limited assignment to the Raleigh area often send their own children. About 100 students from kindergarten through grade 12 attend the school. The school's goal is to assist Japanese children in the maintenance of both their Japanese language and academic skills, especially mathematics, in anticipation of their return to Japan and the Japanese school system. In it's very beginning the Japanese Saturday school program was housed at Wiley Elementary. But the program's focus differed from the public school's Japanese program focus and materials for the two programs were neither compatible nor interchangeable. And, after a few years, space became an issue for the increasingly popular school. The Japanese Saturday school is now located in

nonpublic school space. Yet interestingly, several of Yoshiko's public school students have made their way to the Japanese Saturday school program in order to get additional Japanese language instruction.

Yoshiko maintains an uneasy relationship with her identity as a Japanese teacher. Her lack of a college degree that is recognized by the state of North Carolina, along with North Carolina's lack of a fully developed certification license in Japanese have frustrated her in her efforts to be viewed as a bona fide teacher. She's particularly disappointed that her very specialized training and her success have not been recognized by assistance in gaining a certification in the Japanese language or rewarded with some equivalent designation. This lack of "teacher" designation continues to create complications concerning salary issues, tenure and the security and stability it provides, and professional enhancement opportunities, including the right to receive certain staff development funding for further training.

Even though Yoshiko has taught Japanese at her current school for 17 years, outlasting several administrators and numerous faculty at the school, and even though her program is one of the oldest documented Japanese language programs in the United States, she cannot technically be classified as a "teacher" because she does not fit the mold--she does not meet what until recently were nonexistent state requirements for Japanese language teachers. And although she is annually invited to give national workshops to other teachers now instructing Japanese, and regardless of how "cutting edge" the offerings of Japanese language program at her school, Yoshiko's real employment status is still officially lower than that of a teacher--more like that of an aide. Hers may be a very unique skill in a very specialized program, but recognition of this accomplishment has not been forthcoming through the granting of certification or the elevation to full status as teacher.

CHAPTER 3
MISAKO'S STORY

Misako's teaching schedule is very tight on this day of our interview. She is driving between her Japanese classes in the morning at Poe Magnet School to her afterschool Japanese language classes at Olds elementary school, located across town. She has offered to come to my office, located between the two schools, to participate in the interview. I offer to supply lunch. Over Bojangles chicken biscuits and sweet iced tea we tackle the questions on the interview guide, and reminisce about her teaching Japanese in Wake County. Although I've known Misako for a number of years through my former role as district foreign language supervisor, I have known her less well, and for a shorter period of time, than Yoshiko.

Beginnings

Born Misako Tsumanuma in the Otaka district of downtown Tokyo on January 1, 1946, Misako was the eighth of nine children--five older brothers, one older sister and two younger sisters. She describes her family as middle class Japanese. Her father was a mechanic and her mother a housewife. Misako was closest to Emiko, her older sister. She giggles when describing herself as a "tomboy" growing up. When I ask what it means to her to be a "tomboy" she explains "climbing trees, playing with her older brothers and their friends, enjoying boys' games."

Misako attended a traditional Japanese elementary school and then attended what she describes as an "old-fashioned" all girls' school during her high school years.

In middle school and then once a week in high school she had been instructed in English. She also remembered during the course of the interview that she had studied Chinese for three years in high school, a requirement of that particular institution. But it wasn't something she readily remembered, and it wasn't a subject of which she was particularly fond. She claims that she did not enjoy languages at all in high school. Later she attended a trade school to learn dress making.

Tim: You were really preparing to be seamstress?

Misako: It was not like that. My parents wanted me to settle like a Japanese housewife. My parents didn't know I would end up living in the United States. I didn't have any idea I would end up married to an American.

Tim: Do your consider your parents typical Japanese?

Misako: They were but they passed.

Tim : Did they want to arrange a marriage for you?

Misako: Well, my aunt did. But my mother is like . . . an outgoing person and knows about the new generation. She (aunt) was some kind of matchmaker. But my mother was against that, because she thought, "a person who wanted a wife like Misako is gonna be real sorry (laughs)."

Coming to America

Misako lived in Tokyo until 1971. That year she was 24. She traveled to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to visit her American fiance whom she had met the previous year in Japan. At the time he was stationed there in the navy. He had become interested in the Japanese language and culture himself, and had begun studying Japanese there while also studying math at the university. In the beginning, his Japanese language skills were not very good.

Misako: When we started dating, he would bring English-Japanese dictionary, I would carry a Japanese-English dictionary, like that.

After the couple were married in the United States they returned to Japan some time later where her husband continued to study math. In 1979 they came back to the United States. Misako's family was somewhat divided about her move to the United States. Her father wasn't particularly happy about the move; her mother was happy as long as Misako was happy.

Her husband's untimely death came in 1982 (she has since remarried) while Misako was back in Japan on a visit with their two children. She immediately returned to the United States with the kids.

In 1983 Misako began teaching Japanese conversation courses for an independent, locally-owned language school/translation service called Triangle International Language Company (TILC). A customer for whom she was tailoring referred her to the company, knowing they were looking for instructors of Japanese language, mostly to instruct adults. The language programs were designed to aid professionals who needed to gain an immediate working knowledge of the target language. Just like that, Misako had moved into the world of education.

Turning Point: Becoming a Teacher of Japanese

Several years later, around 1985, Misako was assigned by TILC to teach Japanese in the magnet middle school Japanese language program in Wake County. TILC (the name was later changed to Dialogos) had a contractual arrangement to provide and supervise a specific number of foreign language instructors in the Wake County Public School System during a period of foreign language teacher shortage. Need for language teachers in various languages had rapidly grown and exceeded the number of available certified teachers, or as in the case of Japanese, which had no certification, the number of qualified instructors. This perceived need

was not always driven by the number of parental requests for a language, but rather a commitment to a group of early supportive parents of the magnet program in which they had enrolled their kids. The school system had promised to deliver a specific program (in this instance, Japanese) and had committed to maintain it at nearly any expense.

Misako began her teaching duties in the already established middle school program at Carnage Middle School in 1986 as a part-time instructor of Japanese. The very next year she picked up additional teaching duties in Japanese at Poe Elementary School midway through the year. There, an elementary Japanese program had been implemented in 1982 along with the program at Wiley Elementary, but had experienced a number of set backs. The Japanese program had been discontinued three years later. Then in 1987 a new principal at the school tried to reinstate Japanese. He wanted to return to the model of an international magnet with numerous foreign language offerings at the school as had originally been designed. He investigated and located a program that recruited young Japanese men and women to come to the United States to teach Japanese language and culture. What was later discovered was that these "teachers" came to the U. S. with little or no training in teaching. The twenty-five year old Japanese law student who as recruited for Poe Elementary School left mid-year in a tearful huff after numerous complaints from parents and other teachers concerning his teaching and classroom management skills.

The school system came to the aid of the Japanese program at Poe Elementary School by seeking additional teaching hours from Dialogos (formerly TILC). Misako stepped in at mid-year to pick up the pieces as an employee of that private language agency.

When I ask Misako how she had acquired her skills for teaching Japanese, she refers back to advice she remembers from her late first husband, from what her

husbands' teachers in Japan had told him and what he had later shared with her. She adapted this information to the elementary school level, adding insights from her own child rearing experiences. When I asked Misako in what order she taught the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing she explained:

> Misako: To little kids, first hearing, then writing then reading . . . conversation comes with hearing. I think the most important is hearing . . . let them get used to my language. Once they know how to write the sounds in the listening, then conversation. I like for them to understand simple letters like hiragana, then katakana, then kanji . . . (for) weekday, month.
>
> Tim: What about romanization (or romaji, a method of writing Japanese characters with Roman letters), do you ever use it?
>
> Misako: Romanization is never going to (be) use(d) except when some student have difficulty with sound, but once a student knows that letter sound, it's ok.

Misako's program at Poe is organized and scheduled differently from Yoshiko's program at Wiley. Misako's students take Japanese for a 42-minute period only twice weekly, either in a Monday/ Tuesday or Wednesday /Thursday elective block. (Yoshiko's students get double the amount of time for Japanese instruction).

> Misako: Two class a week. That is not enough.

It hadn't always been so. When the program first began at Poe, the schedule was 4 days a week, just like at Wiley. But in order to induce more students to participate in a foreign language from the several different ones offered at Poe, school administrators, worried about the cost, modified the model. They halved the foreign language periods into two fewer days per week, thus doubling the opportunities for enrollment in each language. Misako is aware of the greater of number of days at Wiley, and regrets she was unable to match that schedule for her students.

> Misako: Compared to another school like Wiley our students arevreal behind them. And also they're teaching and we're teaching a different way.

Illuminations

Misako is sad on this day of our interview. She has just recently learned that this will be her last year teaching Japanese in the elementary school at Poe for the program is being closed there, and discussing the effort she had put forth to make the program successful makes her wonder if there was something else she could have done. The school system has recognized that as a magnet school, it has not been attracting students from outside the neighborhood, and for the past two years a new type of magnet program has been phasing in, a Montesorri Magnet. The program has started in kindergarten and first grades with additional grade levels of the program slated to be added each year. Japanese is no longer in the school's future, although a Spanish program will remain.

Nevertheless, Misako has been recruited to teach Japanese at Southeast Raleigh, the new year round technology high school which opened in the summer of 1997. Additionally, she continues to teach Japanese at Ligon Middle School where she began teaching in 1995. This full schedule has forced her to discontinue participation in an after school Japanese program at Olds Elementary.

Misako continues a theme raised by Yoshiko regarding the expectation of parents.

Misako: Parents' complaints, parent complaints is one thing I don't like about parents. Because (they're) pushing kids, push too much. Parents know (about) working for Japanese company, so that's when they push them to learn. I like it to be more fun to learn.

Also Misako concurs with Yoshiko's concern about limited resources and supports Yoshiko's claims that insufficient training in the teaching of Japanese is available locally.

Tim: Tell me about anything you've done that helps you with learning about teaching Japanese as a second language.

Misako: I am self taught. Now that I have time, I'd like to go to some workshops, but most workshops are just for Spanish and French. We should have Japanese.

Misako enjoys teaching Japanese and recognizes that she should pursue additional training now that she is teaching full time at the high school and middle school level. Like Yoshiko, she never expected to become a teacher.

Because she is not credentialed in any subject area, she too is ineligible for many of the benefits that go with a true "teacher" position. Her experience with the termination of Japanese at Poe Elementary has underscored for her the fact that she is subject to the whims of the school system with this particular language. This time it worked out in her favor with a move to the high school. But she has no job security. She's just teaching year to year.

CHAPTER 4
SUMAKO'S STORY

I entered Sumako's classroom toward the end of the school day, taking my seat in a small chair at the back. The children were working in groups, at what appeared to be some type of learning centers. Just before the children left school for the day, Sumako introduced me to them and asked me to tell them why I had come. I had overheard her relate to another teacher earlier that some of the kids had thought that I was a dad. So I sat on the floor in front of the children and explained to them as best I could in English that I was looking at schools like theirs where kids could learn Japanese at an early age. These were kindergarten children, and learning Japanese was so normal for them that they seemed a little surprised at my interest in the novelty of the school. It was almost the end of the school day. Soon the children departed with book bags and papers in hand. After things settled down a bit I began my interview with Sumako.

Beginnings

A family tragedy haunts and disturbs the closing portion of my interview with Sumako but is, I feel, the best way to begin telling her story.

Tim: Oh, I wanted to ask . . . I felt like I skipped over . . . so you were born in Hiroshima . . . so that was 1949, after the war?

Sumako: Right.

Tim: So, do you have any memories?

Sumako: Of Japan?

Tim: Yea, as a child.

Sumako: Yes, I do.

Tim: Anything you want to share with me?

Sumako: Ah, oh, just memories as a child. We lived in Hiroshima, near the city. What happened is, when the bomb fell . . . my parents were in China, in Manchuria . . . and they were sent there by the Japanese government. So my father was a officer, he was able to take his family. So we were all . . . I wasn't born yet. They were in Manchuria and so when the bomb fell my family was away.

Continuing, without anger or accusation, she relates why is was that in late 1930s and early 1940s her father was in Japan, yet his parents (her grandparents) remained in California during World War II.

Sumako: But the reason my father was in Japan is that when my grandfather came here, (my father was born here) . . . and my grandfather sent him (father) back to Japan. He (grandfather) had two sons. Both boys were at day care in the Buddhist church. My grandparents were working in the fields and the two boys were left at the Buddhist Church. And somebody set fire to the church in the day when they were taking a nap, and my father's older brother was killed. And my grandfather felt it was dangerous for his only (remaining) son to be (living) here and so he sent (him) to Japan to be safe, to be educated there. . . .

Tim: Your grandfather was here working as a laborer, here in the area?

Sumako: In Sacramento, yes.

Tim: So that would have been about the '20s . . . '30s, you think?

Sumako: He came here, well he went to Hawaii when he was sixteen, then he came over here.

In 1868 the Meiji emperor was restored in Japan and a strong centralized government was established. The move to industialization and militarization was pursued as a defense strategy, and heavy taxes were levied to support this progress. Japanese farmers suffered serious economic hardships in the 1880s.

In Hawaii, there was a need for labor and the Japanese helped fill this need. Later, the same labor shortage situation in Californina drew Japanese from Hawaii and Japan to the United States mainland (Takai,1989).

Sumako: So I'm not really sure of the date. . . I just know the events. I know why we, my grandfather was here and my father was in Japan. . . . It was due to racism. He (grandfather) said, "I was afraid. My first son was killed . . . in a fire."

Tim: They think the fire was set?

Sumako: Oh, it was. They found the person and he was put on trial. He was convicted. He set the fire. And what happened was my father was on the bottom floor because he was younger, and his brother, what would have been my uncle, was on the top floor, and they couldn't get him out. And all the children who were sleeping upstairs for a nap were killed. All the ones in the downstairs were saved. So my grandfather thought it was unsafe. . .

Tim: But . . . his (father's) parents, they were still in the United States . . . were they here during the war?

Sumako: Yes, they were put in camps . . . they were put in Tullee, Tullee Lake. . . . You know what? If you meet anybody here who are Japanese-American . . . I'm sure their grandparents, it has to be their grandparents now, were in the camps. . . . My grandparents were in the camps, Tullee Lake. But my father wasn't. He was in the war. He was in China.

Coming to America

Sumako: And so, ah, after the war, they (parents) came back (from Manchuria to Hiroshima), and you know, the devastation and everything. Maybe that's one of the reason's we came (to the US). That maybe it was better that . . . economically, it was better for us to come here. And my grand folks, they were already here.

Sumako's grandfather sponsored her family to come to the United States from Japan in 1954. Sumako's family moved to Sacramento where her gandparents lived. She lived there until she graduated from high school and moved to the Bay Area.

Turning Point/ Becoming a Teacher of Japanese

Sumako explains that after she first graduated from college she was looking for a job. Perusing the classifieds in the two local Japanese language newspapers to which she subscribed, she noticed an advertisement for a bilingual Japanese-English speaking teacher:

> Sumako: I got it (job) through the newspaper . . . the Japanese paper! Good thing I read the Japanese paper! The position was not advertised in English language papers.

Sumako began as a Japanese teacher in the Japanese Bilingual/Bicultural Program at Clarendon in 1973, as one of the original teachers the very year the Japanese program opened. She taught in it for more than a decade before taking a break of about seven years to have and raise her children. Her husband is a Chinese-American, who was born in China and immigrated to the United States in his teens. The children, a girl, eleven, and a boy, seven, only speak a little Japanese in the home.

> Sumako: . . . my husband doesn't speak Japanese, so its difficult . . . he speaks Chinese, I speak Japanese, but we don't speak the same language, so our children do not hear us conversing in that language. . . . We just speak English. . . . But, because of grandparents, they're exposed to both languages.

Sumako's education and training would certainly appear to uniquely qualify her for her current teaching assignment. After her early years in Japan and in Japanese schools, the family immigrated to California and she attended American schools. A B.A. in social science from UC Berkley as well as a teaching credential from that institution were her early preparation. A bilingual/bicultural credential from San Francisco State focusing on Japanese was later added as part of the training required for teaching in the Japanese program.

Sumako details how the Japanese language and culture program in San Francisco began:

> Sumako: The program started here because Japanese-Americans felt they had lost their language and culture. And so they wanted their sansei or yonsei actually, the fourth generation Japanese children, to have the language back. That's how it started. . . . It started out with a core of parents who were Japanese-Americans. . . and they had the political savvy, knowledge to approach the board of education to get it started.

Describing the special training undertaken to prepare for teaching in such a program, she relates:

> Sumako: . . . We took the Japanese bilingual/bicultrual credential. It was primarily centered on language, learning the language. And because we were already teachers we applied the knowledge we have of teaching children to teaching the language as well. . . . The credential itself was directed to Japanese . . . we took a lot more Japanese classes. . . . I think since it was such a new program that when we were trained, the training could have been better. . . . But we were trained, we had to take classes in Japanese language and culture.
>
> Tim: And they were conducted in Japanese?
>
> Sumako: . . . primarily. Dr. Moshima was . . . but many students in that class were more English speaking and she had to flip back and forth. . . . But she emphasized the language, that we were to be exposed to the language, to know the language better.

Sumako explains to me how at Clarendon the Japanese portion of the program, focusing on the English-speaking students, is organized. It meets four times weekly for an hour with native paraprofessionals called "sensei" (teacher in Japanese). However, Sumako herself is Japanese-speaking and utilizes the language throughout the day with all of the children, as she feels appropriate.

> Sumako: We have Japanese centers. That's (points) a Japanese center there. So I divide the class up to four different groups, language groups. And so that she's (sensei) able to focus in on Japanese speaking children that are learning reading and writing, whereas the English-speaking children will be learning the oral.

Tim: I've noticed a lot, the times I've been here, of back and forth (language). I mean it's almost, if you didn't understand, you'd wonder. It almost seems like the children get individual attention.

Sumako: . . . In groups. We work in smaller groups. We try to divide them up into groups mainly because of Japanese children. If it weren't for the Japanese children, I think we would divide the children a little differently.

Tim: I know you have developed a Japanese curriculum, because I own a set, and it's integrated, I mean, that's the nature of the school. Everything's integrated, as I understand, into the language.

Sumako: Yes, yes we try to . . . what Mrs. Kona (sensei) and I do before school starts, we get together and we go through, and every month say, "What are we going to teach them?" . . . its thematic. Like, right now besides the holidays day they do and the seasons they do, she does the calendar. Those things that she does on her own. I would say to her, "oh, this month we're going to be studying animals because we're going to visit the museum. And then she'll dovetail and say, " Ok, we'll do animals (gogitsu)." And she'll do vocabulary in that so that it's not isolated. So it would be in both languages. Similar themes, similar ideas.

Explaining why students choose to come to the Japanese bilingual/bicultural program; Sumako identifies the make-up of the program's student body.

Sumako: First of all you have this Japanese- speaking group of students whose parents want them in this program so that they have an easier time getting . . . into English . . . ESL, English as a second language. . . . And then you have another group of parents who might be Japanese-American and who felt that they don't know the language, so they would want their children to have the language. . . . And then, this other group have no Japanese background altogether, but they chose Japanese as the language. That's the contact. Also, they see this program as good academically, so even though their priority may not be Japanese language and culture . . . they pick this program . . . so its not just because of the language, I don't think.

Illuminations

The manner in which Sumako and her family were reunited with her grandparents in the United States following World War II is, I feel, essential to

understanding how she became involved teaching Japanese. Her grandparents' hopes and struggles are basic to Sumako's bond with her Japanese culture, a culture of which she is proud and sharing. Her personal understanding of racism through her own family's story perhaps gives her a motivation to broker the Japanese culture that others may not have.

The story of the Japanese people in the United States unfolds like a Michner novel. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Americans had begun contracting laborers from Chinese ports and viewed Japan as a new source of labor for the sugarcane fields of Hawaii and the rich agricultural areas of California (Takai, 1963). 89 The arrival of three American "black ships" into Edo (now Tokyo) Bay in July of 1853 had ended over 200 years of deliberate isolation of the Japanese from the outside world (Varley, 1973). Japan had, in 1639, initiated an era of seclusion that remained uninterrupted until the arrival of the Americans desiring to establish favorable trade agreements with the Japanese. Assistance and supplies for ships sailing to the Orient were initial motivations for American trade agreements with Japan. The archipelago's geographical location made Japan the obvious choice as a stopover point.

At the initial encounter of Commodore Perry's American fleet with Japanese boats guarding the bay, an ironic conveyance of communication ensued. American sailors had been unable to understand the shouts in Japanese coming from the lead guard boat as it approached. However, crew were soon able to make out a written message displayed by the guard boat–not in Japanese writing but in the Roman alphabet–"Départez!" (Go away!) The message was inscribed in French. The two nations that in the coming century would rise to be major Pacific powers made their first significant contact in a language unrepresentative of either nation (Fallows, 1994).

As Americans delayed in Japan during the decade of the 1850s and '60s to get labor agreements signed, a civil revolution was brewing internally. The ban on Japanese emigration was still in effect, but difficult to enforce. In 1868 the Hawaiian consul general secretly recruited and transported to Hawaii 148 Japanese contract laborers and in 1869, 26 contract laborers were taken to California to start a silk farm. Both efforts failed economically, but in 1886 the Japanese government relaxed its stand on immigration, opening the way for tens of thousands of Japanese workers to come to Hawaii and the United States (Takai, 1989). By 1940, 126,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans lived in the continental United States.

Yet Sumako is not "just" Japanese. Although she was born in Japan, she has been in the United States since she was five years old. And her father's parents were already here when her immediate family immigrated. She attended American schools. Her English is unaccented. And her husband is Chinese-American, starting the Americanization process with her children being Japanese-Chinese-American. Sumako is truly a mediator of both Japanese and American language and cultures.

Sumako initially did not train to become a Japanese language teacher. Rather she had the background, ability and skills required when the opportunity to teach the subject arose. Immigrating to the United States with her immediate family when she was five years old truly let her maintain a foothold in the two cultures.

This understanding and belief in the power of being bilingual/bicultural is an important theme which comes through in the interview with Sumako.

> I think there's value in knowing more that one language . . . (and) its extremely important to know your own language and culture.

The idea is emphasized further when she tells me:

> Well, you know, I don't separate the teaching of Japanese and being a teacher. I think when I'm proud of being a teacher its pretty much the same.

This acknowledgement of the role of both Japanese and English in the school is institutionalized in the very description of a "bilingual/bicultural program" that draws from the three different types of clientele: 1) Japanese speaking-children who will later be going into ESL, 2) children of Japanese-Americans wanting their children to know the Japanese language, and 3) children with no Japanese background but whose parents want them to learn the language.

A dual purpose program such as the one in which Sumako teaches must necessarily be concerned about the balance between the two languages and cultures. The double responsibility of teaching English to Japanese speaking children and Japanese to English speaking children in the same classroom was made very clear to to me as the interview was conducted, for often I had to clarify if we were talking about teaching English or teaching Japanese.

Tim: In what year of instruction is it (writing) begun ?

Sumako: Well, if it's for the Japanese speaking (student) it starts immediately because most of them can write some hiragana and they can write their name in hiragana, so it starts immediately.

Tim: What about English speaking kids?

Sumako: In kindergarten it just should be oral, it should be listening and oral, games and maybe a little bit of just recognition that there is a Japanese alphabet . . . through song, games...just exposure to the sounds of it, and just looking at it like we do. We see the alphabet, exposure in that way. But writing is extremely difficult.

Sumako emphasizes to me that in her class it is actually the sensei who does the direct Japanese instruction and that she, Sumako, reinforces the Japanese for the English speaking children in particular. It depends on the situation and the moment. "I'll tell the children it's time to have a snack, or time to go to the centers, or time for lunch in Japanese," Sumako explains. She reinforces the Japanese for the children that the sensei has begun to instruct.

The context of the bilingual/bicultural program in which Sumako teaches and the interview with Sumako suggested a second important theme dealing with a concern about how the program can be refined to better meet the needs of students learning Japanese, and the crucial importance of seamless communication between the teacher and the paraprofessional, as well as tight communication among all of the staff involved in the program.

> Sumako: Right now the teachers and the senseis meet and we work out some kind of (plan) because its always changing. I know there's a curriculum but it has to evolve where everybody's more on the same page on what each grade is doing, what kinds of expectations we have and what kinds of emphasis we have. Because right now we do have a core curriculum, but every teacher and every sensei can work out a plan on their own. I think that we need communication with all the senseis and all the classroom teachers to work out an oral language program for all the English speakers (learning Japanese). I think we need to work out an oral language, strictly oral language approach. I think its the greatest need for the English speaking, because while it seems like its easier to teach culture, its easier to teach reading and writing in many ways.

Sumako further elaborates:

> You can just go, "here, let's memorize that and this, but I think we need to have a language that's alive to them, that they can use all the time. They'll learn daily conversations and phrases and I think those, that's the real big challenge. The sensei have grown up with an educational system real different from ours . . . and so the emphasis (they place) may be a little different. I feel that because it is a second language for a large population we need to approach it differently. . . . We need to approach it not like a Japanese school but we need to approach it as a Japanese language where you're teaching somebody orally and in an animated way. Because they're (senseis) from Japan, they teach in a Japanese way in may ways. And it's good for the other two groups, but it may not be good for the English.

Sumako immigrated to the United States when she was five years old, several decades before Yoshiko or Misako in Raleigh. Her Japanese language and culture education continued through her home life and the Japanese community in the United States, while Yoshiko and Misako continued in Japan through the '50s, 60s and part of the '70s. And, like Yoshiko who began a Japanese program and Misako who took

over and restarted a Japanese program, Sumako, too, was one of the original teachers in the Clarendon program in 1973.

Sumako describes the actual Japanese portion of the program for English speaking children as between a half hour to an hour or more daily, and four times each week conducted by the senseis. Older students in the upper elementary grades get the greater amounts of Japanese instructional time, but this varies and depends on what's happening at the school. Several differences are immediately obvious between the program at Clarendon and the two programs in Raleigh. Clarendon has a slightly greater time allotment in direct Japanese instruction, particularly for the older children, than both the programs in Raleigh. The sensei are responsible for the introduction of the Japanese language to the English-speaking students in the classroom. But additionally, Sumako is with the children all day long, and utilizes Japanese with the children as she feels appropriate. She reinforces the language and culture throughout the school day.

Sumako did not initially train to become a Japanese language teacher, yet nevertheless possessed the background, ability and skills needed when the opportunity presented itself in the "Want Ads" of a Japanese language newspaper. And where might an opportunity to teach Japanese to young children in the United States more likely have had a chance to spontaneously generate and flourish than in San Francisco? It is not surprising that contrasts begin emerge in the comparisons across the continent. And yet, a single case does not a contrast confirm. New, or perhaps more specific, interests emerge as groundwork to further shape plans for the two biographies that follow.

CHAPTER 5
KAZUKO'S STORY

I had observed in Kazuko's Japanese class on a visit to San Francisco in 1993 and now again I entered her classroom on the afternoon of the interview. She explained that on this day the school wasn't following a typical schedule because of the Children's Day celebration, a Japanese festival being observed. As I sat quietly, I noted the *sensei* (Japanese paraprofessionals working along with the Japanese classroom teachers in the bilingual/bicultural program) serving *mochi*, a bean paste sweet, to the children and me while Kuzako explained about a special cherry tea she had brought to share with them. To each child and to me was offered warm water in a styrofoam cup in which floated a few sprigs of the precious leaves. The taste was warm and light, very slightly salty and mildly soothing.

At a table in front of me was a young girl eager to gain my attention. She wanted to be certain I had noticed that the butterfly farm, housed in a large aquarium on the back shelf, was taking wing. Tens of the newly emerged insects rested on the segment of a tree limb propped inside the tank, rhythmically fanning their colorful newfound appendages to and fro. I nodded "yes" conspiratorially. Actually, it was one of the first things I had noticed when I entered the room. Later in the lesson Kazuko called on a student in Japanese and asked him how many cocoons in the butterfly farm were now metamorphosed. I couldn't understand the entire question, but the student replied in Japanese, and from Kazuko's response, apparently most appropriately.

Because of my interview schedule, I had to leave the classroom to observe in Sumako's (my next scheduled interviewee) class. Later in the afternoon I returned to Kazuko's classroom for the interview, after the children had left for the day. Kazuko sat at a table, reviewing some of her childrens' work.

Kazuko's story is best told through a lightly edited version of the original transcription from tape. Descriptions of her youth and education, her interest in English language, travels with her husband who was in the military and raising a family, her study of German in Germany and later of return to the United States help begin to explain her perspective. Her ideas about education, her belief in the power of the children to teach one another, and of their inherent kindness, her own need for the Japanese class to experience her culture and of her need to be involved in sharing her language and culture in order to feel at home are most elegantly and thoughtfully told in her voice.

Beginnings

Tim: You're Japanese?

Kazuko: Yes.

Tim: Hundred percent?

Kazuko: Japanese-American. My background . . .

Tim: Ethnicity?

Kazuko: Ethnicity is Japanese. I left when I was twenty-five.

Tim: Where's Tottori Prefecture? (She had earlier told me she was from there).

Kazuko: It's Honshu, very close to Kyushu. So it's the southern part of Honshu. That's the place I was born but I don't remember. That's the birth place. It was in Kyushu, in Fukkaoka. That's were I went all schooling and my childhood.

Tim: You grew up speaking Japanese? *(I'm trying to determine if Kazuko had early English language experience because I find that her spoken English sounds nearly flawless to my ear.)*

Kazuko: Oh sure, I have Japanese parents, two brothers, Japanese brothers.

Tim: But your English is almost without accent.

Kazuko: Well, Japanese students, they start learning English when they start seventh grade.

Tim: Right, but usually . . .

Kazuko: (Laughs understandingly)

Tim: the English that the Japanese learn in Japan, particularly for someone of our generation, was not that good. They read (English) well . . .

Kazuko: Right, I worked on it.

Tim: You must have.

Kazuko: I went to college. I majored in English.

Tim: Actually I thought you were born here (in the US). I thought maybe you were born of Japanese parents.

Kazuko: Thank you.

Coming to America

Tim: Really. Your English is really quite good. But you came here at twenty-five? So tell me about you. You lived in Japan until twenty-five and then moved to the United States?

Kazuko: Because I was married, to an American.

Tim: You married an American in Japan?

Kazuko: American, yes. My husband was in the military so we moved all over. I was a normal housewife, raising children.

Tim: Children? How many children do you have?

Kazuko: I have two. Now they are twenty-two and twenty-five.

Tim: Boys? Girls?

Kazuko: First one is girl and second one is boy. (Ah, there it is, finally, dropping of an indefinite article. Not necessarily incorrect or a mistake, but an English sentence sounding Japanese to my ear. The Japanese language employs neither definite nor indefinite articles, thus the use of such markers would be alien to a native speaker of Japanese. I can "hear" by her English that Kazuko grew up speaking Japanese.)

Tim: Do they speak Japanese?

Kazuko: A little. They learned Japanese most when I brought them back to Japan but they forget.

Tim: Your husband was in the military? Did you meet him in Japan?

Kazuko: Yes.

Tim: You said you've lived all over. Where else did you live?

Kazuko: Well, first we went to Pennsylvania, then Washington state for a year. We were then assigned to Korea for a year, then Texas and Colorado for much shorter times, then back to Washington state for six years and . . .

Tim: You've lived in more places?

Kazuko: Yes, Germany

Tim: How long were you in Germany?

Kazuko: Six years in Germany. Then we came back to San Francisco, to the Presidio for six years. That was the last station, so . . .

Tim: *(Ironic--"to the Presidio," the place where Japanese instruction first began large-scale in the United States).*

When war with Japan appeared inevitable in the autumn of 1941, two army intelligence agents warned their chiefs of the lack of qualified Japanese speakers. Reischauer (1977) states that it is calculated that in 1934, some 60 years after the opening of Japan to the West, only 13 scholars in the United States were capable of making use of the language. Japanese language instruction in the United States began in earnest when the two officers were given $2,000 to commence a Japanese

language program at the Presidio in San Francisco. Weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor the school opened with a faculty of three Japanese-American teachers and a student body of 60.

Fifteen students eventually flunked out due to the difficulty of the course. Forty of the graduates where assigned to front line duty interrogating prisoners and intercepting messages. The other five graduates went on to join the faculty of the school which eventually trained 6,000 men in the language, almost all of whom were Japanese-Americans (Hosakawa, 1991).

Kazuko: We bought a house in Novato, which is Marin, close to Golden Gate Bridge. That's where we live.

Tim: So you commute?

Kazuko: Yes, about an hour.

Tim: Uh . . . a long drive. I'm familiar with that area.

Kazuko: But a beautiful view. It doesn't bother me.

Tim: If you've gotta commute it's a beautiful place to do it. Your children still live in this area ?

Kazuko: Ah, my daughter lives in San Francisco and my son is still living with us.

Tim: Could you tell me about your educational background?

Kazuko: I went to regular public elementary school.

Tim: In Japan?

Kazuko: In Japan. Middle school and high school my mother put me in private school, called a mission school in Japan.

Tim: Was it a private girl's school?

Kazuko: Girl's school, Protestant. There were a couple Americans there. Maybe that's where I picked up English sound there. I was always interested in English speech.

Tim: So you were interested in English?

Kazuko: Yes, I was very interested in English during school.

Tim: Did you study any other languages besides English?

Kazuko: Yes, German. When we were in Germany I learned German language. I was very interested in that, too. I took all the courses up to advanced. But when I left, I was really depressed because there's no way to use German. Nobody to speak German and so slowly I forgot. Once in awhile I watch the movie or TV and then German language comes and its like . . . that . . . but . . . then . . . (*here Kazuko lapses and grasps a bit for words and then quickly recovers*) and then I got frustrated because I forgot. I knew all the grammar and everything. So German I was interested in. ("So German I was interested in?" My discussion in English with a Japanese language teacher who speaks nearly flawless English about the German language has caused her to unconsciously use German syntax! It's increasingly clear to me that Kazuko has a natural facility with language.)

Tim: What about college?

Kazuko: After I graduated high school, junior and senior girls' high school I went to college.

Tim: What about specific training for teaching, or specific training for teaching Japanese?

Kazuko: Mmm. Actually, teaching Japanese we didn't do. But general teaching, during college, you know, I took courses for teaching.

Tim: What about jobs you've had. What are some significant jobs?

Kazuko: I taught English to adults.

Tim: In Japan?

Kazuko: Yes, because business people wanted to learn. After I graduated university I taught in military school, dependent school, a school they call "host nation language school." I taught juniors, junior and senior high. It was combined. I taught them Japanese culture and language there. In an American school in Japan.

Tim: Tell me about some other jobs you've had, other significant jobs.

Kazuko: I didn't do much, because after that I got married and then I raised kids and all I could do is . . . mmm . . . I did a little bit cosmetic sales and then also tour guide. That was interesting. In Washington state, when I was in Washington state I welcomed all the Japanese tour groups and took them to Vancouver and Victoria Island.

Tim: You were a tour guide for Japanese tourists coming in? Would this have been in the '70s, the '80s?

Turning Point/ Becoming a Teacher of Japanese

Kazuko: Mmm, the '70s. Eighties I was in Germany. Seventies I was raising kids, doing little side jobs. Never did anything in school. But while I was in Germany my kids were all in school. My youngest one had started (school) so I could work. I worked in, again,dependent school there, for the military. That's how I became interested in teaching. That's my life. More than language, educating children is my life. I started to teach Japanese in Japan, for the dependents.

Tim: Is this for wives of service men?

Kazuko: Not wives . . . junior and senior school.

Tim: But Americans?

Kazuko: Seventh grade to twelfth grade. Yes, Americans. There were electives and they chose, like cooking and other things, and one was Japanese culture. So I taught. In Germany it wasn't Japanese language teaching, it was just regular American. And when I came back I got the teaching degree from San Francisco State. At that time it was a general teaching degree.

Tim: Ok, but did you get a bilingual, bicultural Japanese certificate here?

Kazuko: Well, that's the real problem, you know, we want it but then they didn't offer us, the district did not offer us the test. They said, "Well, in couple years we will give you a test, so prepare." So we got together. I was in another school. There were many teachers here wanted to take. And they needed some instructors, so I came here and taught them Japanese because this is my first language. And so I went through all the courses for the district, like sheltered English and everything, but when we are done studying they didn't offer us, they changed mind. It is a need. So, they sort of waived us, but we don't have any definite certificate (for Japanese). Some people have, because earlier they gave, and then I think, about ten years ago they didn't give.

Tim: Tell me, what year did you start teaching here?

Kazuko: Ah, '89.

Tim: And you've taught here since then?

Kazuko: Yes.

Tim: Every year?

Kazuko: Yes. First year it was very hard to get into this district, and although I was interested in early childhood, that's my, you know, primary study, but there was no opening, and James Lake Middle School, in this district, the principal is looking for a bilingual teacher, Japanese bilingual teacher who can teach.

Tim: But they weren't so much interested in (Japanese) language?

Kazuko: Language also, I think. I think her plan was to get Japanese kids over there. But before that happened she hired me. So I went there and got job and so I taught math and social studies, just regular one. Although social studies has Japanese in it. I did my best but there were no Japanese children. I was interested in Japanese, so I left there after one year and then, because there was opening that I was going to kindergarten, Japanese bilingual kindergarten in Sherman, because that time and now also the Japanese bilingual school in this district is this community school. And is enormous, you know, need here. So many people from Japan. So many kids have Japanese background, and even now, after I started last year here, couple parents came who just came from Japan.

Tim: You mean to this school?

Kazuko: Yes. So they were placed in regular school. So I think district knows this problem but . . . when I got the job in Sherman, kindergarten, parents all got together in preschool, Japan town's preschool (the section of San Francisco where Japanese traditionally lived). They knew they couldn't get in here, so they went to district and negotiated and district is good at listening to parents, because you know, they want to satisfy the public and parents. So two years they opened. At that time I didn't know the name, but they opened Japanese bilingual kindergarten so I went there and taught and then they all wanted to continue, so I taught first grade. So two years I taught the same group, but was getting less and less, so the principal over there said, " We can't continue" and consolidated the class.

Tim: I see. Tell me, now here, you work with the Japanese children who speak Japanese, you work with the Japanese-American children who have Japanese in their background and then you have some American children, I suppose most of them are, who don't have Japanese but are trying to learn Japanese. It's gotta be hard.

Kazuko: No, actually, not.

Tim: Really?

Kazuko: No, if you try to teach its very hard, you know, by yourself, all the responsibility. But then I found out, children, they are really neat. They teach, their power is the strongest. They teach each other. So now I know, so I use their power now. Their interest, it has to come from them.

Tim: So that's the real positive thing about having the mix of children?

Kazuko: Right, right.

Tim: The kids for Japanese language meet how many times a week? I mean is it four days a week? But actually you're teaching . . . I heard a good bit of Japanese in here. Its throughout the day isn't it?

Kazuko: Especially, I started about few weeks ago. Have you noticed two girls, new girls who just came from Japan ? The girls sitting there, (points to the now vacant seats) Chika and Shihomi . . . doesn't understand any English. So you know, all Japanese, so I have to speak in Japanese. That relates to what I said earlier, it's a kids' power. That's what's happening in this classroom and that's kids' need. Because I have to help them to understand.

Tim: You help the children also understand each other?

Kazuko: Yes. And then during the math time they wanted to speak (the other classroom children) they wanted to say in Japanese the number because they want Chika and Shihomi to understand. And that's their, kindness. So that's, really exciting. I was here two years ago, after they consolidated my class in Sherman and other school. The principal here, Kanani, knew me and then phoned me. There was one year opening [maternity leave] so I came here and I taught kindergarten. Then she came back and I had to leave. So I went to a regular school, three years, very tough school.

Tim: But did not teach Japanese there? *(Here I'm becoming slightly concerned. My mental calculations make me wonder if I was misunderstood and possibly Kazuko has not taught Japanese at the elementary level but for four years instead of the five established in the criteria. I had asked Kanani to follow the criteria in selecting teachers with five years teaching experience in Japanese at the elementary level. Will this mean I can't use her interview? I need to query more closely to verify.)*

Kazuko: No. But it was good, good learning for me to know other kids and other approach. And then I came back two years later here and then everything is, you know, well the system is all changed again, small class size, so many teachers, and this was the first year, and it was really hard so I have been trying to learn you know how the things will work and so this year kinda experimenting everything. Of course when I came back principal asked me, our biggest, we had one problem, the senseis. Each class cannot have one sensei. And so they have to share and so Kanani asked me. I don't need, I can teach everything by myself. Then I thought, because parents are paying money, too, and then sensei is sort of para- professional teacher and it's a human resource and has to be fair, you know. Plus I have to teach everything, other subject. So, ah', my mind wasn't clear what to say. Maybe after a couple years, you know, I can answer you more.

Tim: So you taught at Sherman in the bilingual program for three years?

Kazuko: No, just two years.

Tim: Two years.

Kazuko: That is they wanted to make it sort of immersion program.

Tim: It wasn't?

Kazuko: It wasn't, but more Japanese speaking over there and more Japanese culture, everything, because I did. I did all those myself.

Tim: It was you alone?

Kazuko: All. Combined all, yes.

Tim: Ok. And you've been back here how long?

Kazuko: Just this year I came back. I taught here.

Tim: Ok, three years ago you taught here? One year?

Kazuko: One year, yes. *(One additional year of teaching. Great, it confirms she is in her fifth year with elementary Japanese, just not consecutive years. This is the end of her fifth year teaching Japanese at the elementary level so I'm counting her as meeting the criteria.)*

Tim: Why do you think your students take Japanese?

Kazuko: Maybe for the children the needs are different. Japanese speaking children want to keep up their language.

Tim: How about English speaking children?

Kazuko: English speaking children I found out many of them they . . . I found gifted children here in this school. They need, you know, additional. . . . They know already those basics. Even if they don't know they learn so quickly compared to other children that I've taught in other schools. And they just learn so quickly, and they always need excitement. And I think just learning Japanese language and culture its different and they like it.

Tim: Of the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, which order do you place the most importance on? In what order, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Kazuko: Listening. In learning language, right.?

Tim: Yes.

Kazuko: Listening and speaking, goes together, reading and writing goes together. Maybe writing first.

Tim: That they go together, that writing is as important as reading. That 's interesting.

Kazuko: Writing may be better because is more hands on, they do, you know. Depends on the age.

Tim: And you teach, this year, just first grade?

Kazuko: First grades. Only kindergarten and first grade. I like primary.

Tim: If writing is taught, in what year of instruction is it begun? You're already working with writing here?

Kazuko: They start, ah, kindergarten.

Tim: Ok. Which syllabary is introduced first? Hiragana or Katakana?

Kazuko: Hiragana.

Tim: And do you use romanization? Romaji? *(Here I begin to realize that I'm not certain if we're talking about English speaking children learning Japanese or Japanese speaking children learning English who are also continuing to learn Japanese).*

Kazuko: Romaji?

Tim: With the children?

Kazuko: No. They are learning regular English for K-1, so I don't want confusion.

Tim: If kanji is taught, when is it introduced? Do you teach kanji?

Kazuko: You know, actually, well in Japan they teach right away. They know a lot, even in first grade. As a picture its very interesting. Because like tree, its shaped like from tree, and moon is like from moon, crescent moon. So in kindergarten I even taught those things. The picture, the simple one. Like river is like flowing.

Tim: Others have said similar things. So you teach some kanji here in first grade then? A little?

Kazuko: This year I'm depending on Morioka (sensei). She does teach a little. Well, we have three different groups. There's Japanese speaking children, and then all, just a little bit . . .

Tim: All within this same class?

Kazuko: They are, yea, but (Japanese) language art class which come 11:35 today, we divide three groups and thirty minutes she'll take, in a kind of kind station, work table. I take English reading for thirty minutes and thirty minutes into the level, their level speaking Japanese. So everyday they get thirty minutes instruction.

Tim: In Japanese?

Kazuko: Yes.

Tim: Why did you become involved teaching Japanese at the elementary school level?

Kazuko: You know what, truth is, my interest was, like I said, educating children and teaching early childhood, primary kids. I like to educate them as a whole. And I don't want to separate this and that, because that's them. They need to as a whole. The reason why I'm here is, its my background. And its my fate. (laughs) Because I'm from Japan and everybody looks at me and, "Why are you here" if I'm teaching in regular class. And at first I was sort of angry. Why not, I'm an educator? I can teach anybody . . . black or white or . . . but then I came back here. I feel like I'm home.And this is my culture, and then I can offer, I can offer a lot . . you know , my background. So this is most natural place, I guess, to teach Japanese and culture.

Tim: From where has your greatest support in teaching Japanese come?"

Kazuko: Children. Because my job is with the children, that's the strongest one, when I see them.

Tim: What about a disappointment in teaching Japanese?

Kazuko: Disappointment is what I see sometimes here happening. . . . I don't know if this is disappointment, but the senseis try to teach everyday, but I don't know if they (students) are getting it. How much they are . . . this is my job, how much they are remembering and, unless its part of their lives they will not remember. So my approach is just when they are here, as a school life, you know, language is a necessity thing. I mean you use it when you need them. So like when we are eating *mochi* today, and drinking, then you want to say, "This is *oshi* " (delicious) and there's meaning there. And if you just, you know . . . they are not adult. It has to be very concrete and they have to be with experiencing. And sometime if you just, ok this thirty minutes is Japanese lesson, and do it I don' t know how much they are learning.

Tim: Do you feel that some ways the senseis don't understand . . . language development?

Kazuko: They are great at developmental part, educator part.

Tim: Then you see your job as helping use them the best?

Kazuko: Yes. But I, I don't know. They have their own program. They established and they worked on it. I don't know. They might in the near future, I have to. But this is my first year back, so I'm sort of observing, you know.

Tim: I understand. Do you feel that you've been successful as a Japanese teacher at the elementary level? And what indicators do you look at? What things tell you that you're successful?

Kazuko: They pick up words, they use it and like if I teach music. I use music a lot, so naturally they learn. So they're great learning all Japanese music.

Tim: I remember you, the last time I was here, going over to the piano and the kids were doing something. They sing a song in English, and then you played another song and it was in Japanese. That really stuck in my mind. I thought wow, these kids are working back and forth here.

Kazuko: (laughs) They do need repetition, too. Yea.

Tim: What about organizations you belong to that address Japanese language instruction of second language? Do you belong to any organizations that are specifically related to language instruction? Or staff development, for language learning?

Kazuko: Mostly senseis go in this school. All the courses that I took, those are staff development stuff.

Tim: The courses in Japanese, the bilingual, you took bilingual, you took courses in Japanese?

Kazuko: Not in Japanese. I don't need to take because its my language.

Tim: How often do you speak Japanese now? I'm just curious.

Kazuko: I don't speak any at home.

Tim: Right, because your husband's American.

Kazuko: Yes. I speak every day with senseis, all the Japanese people. That's great. If I'm not in this school I'm you know, kinda, I don't know. I start not eating Japanese food, I start not speaking Japanese. I'm kinda away from culture.

Tim: So this is like for you, being home kinda?

Kazuko: Yes, this is my home. So its really refreshing and its good for me, I think.

Tim: Ok, so it would be, I hadn't thought about that.

Kazuko: And that's what I found the same thing from the kids from Japan too. Sooner or later they go back. During the Japanese, its good for them, too. That's their culture, that's their background, they feel comfortable.

Tim: Tell me what your greatest needs are, as a Japanese, in this program.

Kazuko: I just, you know, I just think I just have to do my best. Working in this district and all different kinds of programs, and I'm used to all the surprises (laughs), and I'm getting good at it, flexibility.

Tim: What do you mean about surprises?

Kazuko: Well, you know, suddenly you get Japanese kid and you get all sorts of kids and all sorts of helpers and all sorts of senseis, and parents and my job is to recognize, to find out those needs and times and everything.

Tim: Is there anything about teaching Japanese to young children that I haven't asked you about that you think I should know about?

Kazuko: Children are Interested in just language itself. I think they are so, especially children, they are more interested in culture because they can relate to the culture because of their similarity. The values are the same, and you know, they found out they learn naturally and they are very interested in culture. So that's why I think this school prioritizes culture.

Illuminations

The program of Japanese at Clarendon is quite different from the programs in the two schools in Raleigh in which Yoshiko and Misako teach. My interview with Kazuko underscores that point, for the goals of the program and the types of students are different. Clarendon's program is intended for American children learning Japanese, Japanese-American children learning Japanese, and Japanese children learning English. All are in a classroom together. Sometimes the instruction is whole class and sometimes small group, depending on the tasks, and depending on the language. Too, Sumako and Kazuko are responsible for the entire school curriculum. Yoshiko and Misako are responsible for Japanese language only.

And yet, the amount of time strictly dedicated to the formal study of the language, somewhere between a half hour to an hour daily, 4 times each week for Japanese language arts at Clarendon isn't that far off from the time allocation that Yoshiko is allowed for instruction (45 minutes four times each week in an elective, pull out Japanese language program). However, children at Clarendon receive Japanese language and culture interspersed throughout the day within their classroom. And the fourteen Japanese classroom language teachers in the program of which Kazuko and Sumako are representative, plus the various *sensei* and the native Japanese speaking children, let the visitor or observer in the school understand that "Japanese is definitely going on."

Yoshiko in Raleigh has managed to set up a program of Japanese assistants coming from Japan to assist her and to give her students additional support in the classroom. Though on a much smaller scale, these assistants parallel the program at Clarendon which provides the *sensei* , Japanese paraprofessionals who assist/teach Japanese. But Yoshiko must apply yearly for this additional assistance, training the newly arrived aide in August in how to help with the program and saying goodbye each June as the school year ends.

Teachers in Japanese programs must be flexible. Not knowing how stable one's program or position are, what class size will be or what human and material resources will be available from year to year impacts on their planning as Kazuko explains:

> Two years I taught the same group, but was getting less and less, so the principal over there said, 'We can't continue" and consolidated the class. And then I came back two years later here and then everything is, you know, well the system is all changed again, small class size . . . and this was my first year and it was hard.
>
> When I came back, principal told me we had one problem, the senseis. Each class cannot have one sensei, and so they have to share. But, I don't need (referring to the reduced time with the sensei). I can teach everything myself.

This need for flexibiliy is further exemplified by the case of Yoshiko, whose program took several years to grow and who rounded out her teaching with tutoring ESL students during the meantime, or Misako who is losing her elementary Japanese program this year.

Yet Kazuko and the other Japanese teachers at Clarendon do have an advantage that Yoshiko and Misako do not have. The mix of Japanese speaking children with English speaking children is the very essence of the two-way bilingual program in San Francisco and when it comes to learning a language, "they teach each other." Kazuko integrates the Japanese language within the class, throughout the instructional day. Children learn language best through purposeful communication, the

very idea behind an integrated curriculum (Curtain & Pesola, 1994). She taps this power of the children to teach each other, both in Japanese and in English.

> It's a kid's power. That's what's happening in this classroom and that's kids' need. Because I have to help them to understand (each other).

Kazuko views her role as being a broker of culture. She mediates and helps the Japanese and American children negotiate the tasks of the classroom through both Japanese and English, depending on the activity or situation. An example of helping the children understand one another is with the two new Japanese girls, Chika and Shihomi. The other children in the classroom wanted to help the girls understand the math lesson, so they used the language that the new kids would understand, Japanese. Selecting the particular language, either target or first, to convey the particular cultural point, either target or first, becomes a constant judgemental and instructional process for the teacher/broker (Seelye, 1984). Like Yoshiko, the teachers acquaint parents with simple, seemingly inconsequential cultural matters such as the differences in grading papers (a circle drawn on a student paper versus a check mark) from culture to culture And still more importantly as in Kazuko's case, teachers must be patient and understand that the very culture from which they come, along with their "Japaneseness" can lead to suspicion and subtle prejudice that must be handled deftly in certain teaching situations:

> Kazuko: Because I'm from Japan and everybody looks at me and, 'Why are you here?" if I'm teaching in a regular classroom. Why not? I'm educator, I can teach anybody . . . black or white or . . . but then I came back here. I feel like I'm home. And this is my culture, and then I can offer a lot. So this is most natural place for me, to teach Japanese and culture.

Thus the Japanese program at Clarendon allows Kazuko to do what she is most interested in, and that is not primarily the teaching of Japanese. It is foremost, for her, the teaching of children.

CHAPTER 6
DEVI'S STORY

Devi and I had encountered one another briefly the previous day in Sumako's classroom and we remembered that we had actually first met at the Advocates for Language Learning (ALL) conference in Kansas City several years before. She and Kanani Choy, principal of Clarendon Elementary, had made a presentation at the conference on the Japanese Bilingual/ Bicultural (JBB) Program at Clarendon Elementary School. It was there that I had first met them both when I had attended their presentation.

I observed in Devi's classroom for about an hour before the end of the school day, and she asked me to explain to the children my purpose for being there. So the kids gathered around me as I sat on the floor and explained to them about my project, from where I came, and what I hoped to learn. They asked many questions often unrelated to the topic of Japanese, which I answered as best I could. One child reported that her mother recently had been to North Carolina. Another told me that she had just received a new bicycle as a gift.

A little later on the children returned to their learning centers and busied themselves with their various projects . A few students were engaged at a center folding the simplest of origami, taking only three or four folds.

I know well how to make a crane that requires eight folds, so I took up some origami paper (recycled Christmas and gift wrapping paper cut to specific dimensions and stored on a shelf in large stacks) and began folding my crane. Soon I had small

Asian and Caucasian boys and girls crowding and pressing up against me, inquiring of my project and showing me theirs. One girl instructed me on how to fold a goldfish. Almost everyone requested a crane from me. For the final twenty minutes of the school day I folded origami cranes furiously in order to beat the school bell and childrens' departure to be able to fulfill their requests and hand over my creations to them.

The children readied to depart and soon several parents drifted in to port their children home. After everyone had left, Devi offered me tea and we began the interview.

Beginnings

All my other interviewees had what I have come to consider a "Japanese" look, yet somehow Devi was different. The difference, I learned, was that although her mother was Japanese, her father was Indian. "East Indian" she stated, in order not to be confused with American Indian. He had operated an import/ export business in Japan and there had met and married her Japanese mother.

Devi was born in Yokohama in the late '40s and lived in Japan until she was nine years old. She grew up speaking both Japanese and English. Her name, Devi, is not Japanese, but Indian.

Devi attended elementary school in Japan. I was curious about Devi's multiracial heritage, and we discussed the fact that she she grew up with an extended Japanese family of grandparents and aunts, uncles and cousins while living there. Devi's studies continued after leaving Japan at a boarding school in Switzerland where she first learned French.

Coming to America

I began to understand that Devi's immigration to the United States was not so much an event as it was part of a process of her living globally. Having attended school in Asia and Europe, she came to the United States to continue her education. She graduated from the University of San Francisco with a major in French and later received a Masters in multicultural education with a diploma in Japanese language and culture. Yet Devi, like all the other interviewees, had received no formal training in teaching Japanese.

Devi's first job was teaching in an international school in Japan, and she has traveled and taught in a number of international locations. Married to an American whom she met in the United States, she has two sons now in their late twenties.

I was immediately captivated by Devi's story, of traveling, studying and living all over the world, first as a result of her father's import/export business, then for study, and later as a natural extension of who Devi is. During one period Devi states that she actually missed several years of school as a result of the travel:

> Devi: I think I am extremely lucky to have been able to experience the kind of educational background that I've had through living in different countries. I think the world was like an institution where everything was taught to me. I actually missed several years of school, but I learned so much more by traveling.

Turning Point: Becoming a Teacher of Japanese

Like Devi's move to America, her involvement in the Japanese program was more a logical progression of events than a single decision. Devi is trained to teach young children through her master's in multicultural education, and she has a command of Japanese language and culture from her family background and early years in the country.

Devi is currently involved informally with two Japanese preschools in the San Francisco area, one called ABC Preschool and the other, Little Friends preschool. The schools are open to everyone "but of course the ones who are interested in enrolling their children there are either part Japanese or have lived in Japan, have had the language exposure and want to continue." Many of the Japanese Bilingual BiCultrual Program (JBBC) participants come from Little Friends preschool. Devi explains that she's made presentations for Little Friends for several years, talking with parents and prospective parents. Her involvement includes participation in the preschools orientations and other functions throughout the year, including graduation. Devi stresses that the interest in JBBP is so great that there is not always room for everyone who applies and children are put on a waiting list for entrance into the school.

When talking about areas of greatest need, Devi, like Kazuko and Sumako mentions the drastic cut for financial reasons in sensei hours. Where in the past each class had one sensei for the entire day, now two classrooms must share. I mention to Devi that I know they have always had a strong tradition in fund-raising at the school and wonder if such efforts have recently diminished.

> Devi: The reason is not because the parents are less involved in fund raising. They're involved just as much. But salaries (for senseis) keep going up and fringe benefits have to be paid. Some funding is coming through district funds for senseis, but most of it is being funded by parents. It is a great hardship on parents. There's fund raising going on just about all year long. And not only that, there's direct solicitations. So parents are virtually paying a sort of tuition to send their kids here. But they're willing to do it and happy to do it.

Devi helped me understand why Japanese might be considered so "different" to teach and learn for American children as compared to languages such as Spanish or French. This issue, which was addressed by Yoshiko and, less pointedly, by other interviewees, was further explained with Devi's examples.

Tim: I've had a number of people to tell me that Japanese is very different from English, and I'm searching for examples of how this is so. Can you help me?

Devi: It's different in a number of ways such as culture, which is obvious, but it's different in the technical aspects of the language too. It's opposite. Like when you say four fifths (4/5), in Japanese we say *gobun no yon*. *Gobun* is five and *yon* is four. *No* is a particle setting up the construction meaning four parts of five. You see, it's said exactly opposite.

Tim: I wonder, I've often noticed that Japanese friends speaking English, instead of saying something like, "I'll be there in two or three hours" will say, "I'll be there in three or two hours." It's not wrong, its just not the word order we use in English.

Devi: It's the same idea. In Japanese we would put the greater number first. You see, the order, the thought, it's opposite. And counting itself is very different in Japanese.

Counting in Japanese is an example of a process which utilizes meaning-based classes in a completely different manner form English. Often utilized as a indicator of the dominant language of bilinguals, counting is viewed as a basic linguistic and cognitive process. In Japanese the process employs not only numerals but also a system of counters belonging to a subclass of nouns. Long, thin things such as pencils or sticks add the term *hon* (but sometimes *pon* or *bon*). The counter for most animals, fish and insects is *hiki* (or *biki* or *piki*), yet for most large domesticated animals such as cows, horses, dogs and cats the term is *t*oo. Sheets of paper, newspapers, and handkerchiefs take the term *mai*. The words actually used in counting are compounded from the numerals and the counters. Three insects are *sanbiki*; three pencils *sanbon;* three sheets of paper *sammai* (Brown, 1970).

The contrast of the Japanese language system with English is remarkable and is certainly part of the perception of "difference." Subject/agreement is not distinguished in the Japanese language. In fact, most sentences have no stated subject. The lack of differentiation between singular and plural, between definite and

indefinite articles, and between genders, as well as a reduced tense system of perfect and imperfect action further compound the difficulties for the native English speaker. Many of the conventions often regarded as universals in western languages are absent in Japanese (Mariani, 1959).

Japanese, along with languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Korean, is classified as a Category 4 language by the Defense Language Institute. Languages in Category 4 are considered the most difficult for native speakers of English to learn. In contrast, French and Spanish are classified as Category 1 languages, German as a Category 2, and Hebrew and Russian as category 3. In this schema the relative difficulty in learning for English speakers increases with the greater numerical value assigned to the category.

Classification depends not only on listening comprehension and speaking, but also on reading and writing. For example, the break between a Category 2 and a Category 3 language is usually marked with a move from the Roman script to a totally different writing system. As a rule of thumb, Japanese educators generally assert that it takes a native English student studying Japanese three to four times the amount of study in the language to make the equivalent gains one would make in a Category I language such as French or Spanish with an equal amount of study.

English language study is a requirement of the Japanese national curriculum, and I have questioned my interviewees and numerous native Japanese speakers during the course of this project as to whether or not they thought it was more difficult for them to learn English or for an English speaker to learn Japanese. Invariably they answer that native English speakers have the harder time learning Japanese rather than vice versa. And yet interest in learning the Japanese language increases and programs within the United States continue to grow.

Illuminations

Devi was my final interviewee for this project, and in a number of areas she helped answer general questions and tie up loose ends that had arisen in earlier interviews. For her own particular teaching circumstance at Clarendon, she dittoed the concern about reduced sensei time as being an area of greatest need.

Devi: Greatest need? Well, more sensei hours I would think for Japanese. It's been cut so drastically.

Tim: Why was it cut? Financial reasons?

Devi: Right, right, financial reasons. Each class used to have a sensei for the entire day. Now it's down to one sensei for two classrooms.

Yet Devi maintained that parental support through such activities as fund raising continues to be strong. The difficulty is that costs continue to rise--"salaries keep going up (for senseis) and their fringe benefits have to be paid." Interestingly, this need of additional help in the Japanese classroom was also addressed implicitly by Yoshiko in Raleigh, who went about facilitating an Japanese teaching internship program through the JALEX organization in order to get additional help. Too, the parent advocacy group for the Wiley Japanese program has brought numerous issues concerning the program to the attention of the school administration, from maintenance of the four day per week schedule to finding a suitable room for the Japanese classes. Misako had no such advocacy group at Poe Elementary. Could such a group have saved the Japanese program there? We'll never know. Or is the real question "Why did a parent advocacy group arise at one school and not the other?"

Devi's examples and reasoning about why Japanese might be considered different and difficult to teach and learn were enlightening.

Devi: You see, the order, the thought, its opposite. And the culture on which the language depends is so different, too.

Many conventions often regarded as universals of western languages are absent in Japanese (Maraini, 1959). The contrast of the Japanese language system to English is quite remarkable. Subject/verb agreement is not distinguished in the Japanese language. Most sentences have no stated subject. There is no differentiation between singular and plural, between definite and indefinite articles, between genders. A tense system that distinguishes perfect (on-going action) and imperfect (completed action) further compounds the issues of learning the language for native speakers of English.

Conversely, Japanese includes constructions and conventions for which there are no equivalents in English. Various registers of speech containing completely different vocabulary and verb forms are utilized depending on the convention of social status between and among those engaged in conversation. Awareness of this social status is an integral part of the Japanese culture and must be rigidly adhered to for authentic Japanese. Even though most native Japanese speakers appreciate one's interest in learning their language, misused politeness levels (the speech registers depending on social status) can be quite linguistically irritating to native Japanese ears from the point of simple annoyance about impreciseness to that of offensiveness and insult (Magajin, 1992).

The cognates of language and culture that sometimes help students gain a foothold in another language are absent in Japanese. Although Japanese has absorbed many English words, particularly in the past fifty years, pronunciation is generally distorted beyond recognition for English speakers. For example, the word tomato (tomate in Spanish and also a cognate in that language) is an English word that has moved into Japanese and is pronounced TOH mah to. The pronunciation is helpful for an English speaker's understanding, but the word is written in Japanese with only three characters, lacking the written letter to sound correspondence English speakers

normally expect. More often, loan words into Japanese follow a transition such as the word "golf"–Golt-roo-foo in Japanese. The consonant/vowel requirements of the Japanese language change the sound of the English loan word so as to make it nearly unintelligible for the English speaker. And in Japanese culture, the word "hai" is translated as "yes" and often interjected by Japanese listeners, but it only means "I'm listening" not "I agree."

The skills of reading and writing in Japanese are considerably complex for native speakers of English. The two separate phonetic writing systems, hiragana and katakana, collectively called kana, are utilized concurrently in everyday reading and writing. A third system, kanji, derived directly from Chinese characters gives no phonetic clues and has several possible variations of pronunciation and meaning depending on context.

Notwithstanding these important differences in the two languages, Devi's story in many ways exemplified what I found with the other Japanese teachers I interviewed--the idea that there is so much more to their role than just teaching Japanese:

> Tim: Why did you become a Japanese teacher?
>
> Devi: My love for, I think, the Japanese language, customs, culture . . . and not just the Japanese, but multiculturalism was so deep rooted for me that I think I take so much pride in the fact that I come from two different cultures and that I've been exposed to many different cultures and I value it so much. I think I'm fortunate that I have this real broad outlook on how multiculturalism is so valuable in this world--that it should be kept, that it should not be suppressed. Children should be encouraged to go back to their roots and really experience their background to the extent I was able to. I really think that's important.

Veteran Japanese teachers in the elementary schools appear to understand the larger issues of educating children. They advocate and support multiculturalism and utilize Japanese language and culture as a means to this end. They are not teaching children to be "Japanese." Rather, they are utilizing Japanese to teach children, who in

turn are learning the language and culture and, to a degree, the content into which its instruction is integrated.

Epilogue–East and West Coast Japanese Teachers: Raleigh, NC, and San Francisco, CA

During the summer of 1997, the summer after the interviews were conducted, Yoshiko traveled to Japan with seven of her Japanese language students and her school principal, repeating a trip that she and her principal had made to Japan the previous year with three students. Both trips were sponsored by JALEX, the organization with which Yoshiko had worked so closely, conducting training and also supervising interns in her classroom.

As school-year 1998 ends, Yoshiko has been informed that for the first time in seven years she will not have a JALEX sponsored intern placed with her for the coming school year. Budget considerations have required the organization to cut back on the funding of native language interns from Japan and priority for placement of interns will go to Japanese teachers who are non-native speakers of the language. Ironnically, the current Japanese teacher at Enloe High School in Raleigh, the high school where Yoshiko began the program in 1982 and taught until her accident, will have an intern. The current teacher at Enloe is non-native Japanese.

But, Yoshiko is optimistic. She is off again to Japan this summer, and she will visit Wiley Elementary school's sister school in Japan and carry greetings from her own students to the students there. During her stay in Japan, Yoshiko intends "to look for sponsorship from other Japanese businesses and organizations." Yoshiko is flexible. Yoshiko overcomes.

Misako has been very lucky to have left Poe Elementary School. The summer after the interview was conducted, the school was designated a "low-performing school" and a "school-at-risk" based on the end-of-grade test scores of its students. Under

North Carolina's new accountability law known as the "ABCs," the school's low performance on standardized tests brought about a number of interventions, including placement of a team of state instructional specialists to oversee the school's day-to-day operations.

The school and school system claim they have been under siege by the state and that the school's new Montessori model has not been given the time to work. The school has dropped its original magnet "international" designation and is opting for the Montessori model, felt to work better for this particular school and community. For almost a decade, the school had failed to draw in the racial balance of students for which it was originally planned. Sitting almost literally in the shadow of the North Carolina Legislature, the school has become a lightning rod for the state's new accountability law and the struggle between local and state governance.

Meanwhile, Misako is no longer a teacher at the elementary school level but is completing her first year as the Japanese teacher in the school system's first magnet technology high school. She has found the change challenging and rewarding. She continues her Japanese teaching at the middle school level. Misako is flexible. Misako endures.

Sumako, Kazuko, and Davi have completed another year teaching in the Japanese Bilingual Bicultural Program at Clarendon Alternative Elementary School in San Francisco since the year in which the interviews were conducted. Sumako and Kazuko look forward to returning to the school in the fall after summer break. Devi is retiring.

It seemed an auspicious and natural closing point for this research project to contact Dr. Kanani Choy, principal of Clarendon, on June 2, 1998, the day Californians went to the polls to determine, among other issues, the fate of bilingual education in that state. Proposition 227, the English for Children initiative (also known as the Unz initiative, after its author and chief financial backer, Ron Unz) is a controversial

proposal. If the initiative passes, it will end an era of bilingual pedagogy first ushered in in 1967 when the then Governor Ronald Regan signed a bill eliminating the state's English-only instructional mandates and allowing for instruction in languages other than English (Bilingual Education, 1998).

I asked Kanani in our telephone conversation on that morning of the vote what effect she thought passage of the initiative would have on Clarendon's Japanese bilingual program.

> It won't have an immediate effect. It would be battled out in the courts first. And, children can continue to be taught here in two languages as long as their parents agree by signing the permission slip. But in the long run, with possible reallocation of funding, who knows?

I also asked Kanani about past history of the Japanese program at Clarendon and to supply any information she might have on how it related to the Lau case going on at the time of the Japanese program's inception in the early 70s.

> Well, I wasn't around then, But I don't think there was a single, pure motivating factor supporting the opening of the Japanese program. Remember that busing was beginning then and people were looking for alternative programs to address diverse conditions and needs. And, it wasn't always smooth. They didn't always have adequate facilities, and you know the location of this program was moved around.

A quarter century after the Japanese community sought and acquired a Japanese language program to affirm and reflect their native language and culture and a quarter century after the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lau v. Nichols* affirmed the rights of language minority students, voters in the state of California reconsider exactly what it all means with their vote on California's Proposition 227. Educators and politicians around the country watch this bellwether state and agree that what the decision means in California, it may eventually mean elsewhere.

CHAPTER 7
FINDINGS/ENLIGHTENMENT

Teacher Profile

The story told by each teacher interviewed is both personal and unique, yet sharpens on an emerging profile. An analysis of characteristics and experiences shared by the individual teachers begins to suggest common factors in their evolution and endurance as veteran teachers in the field of Japanese language instruction in the elementary schools. Some similar patterns and themes arise from the data, especially since all of the women spent some of their childhood in post World War II Japan. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the patterns and link them together and then to demonstrate how those patterns have intersected with the area of Japanese language teaching at the elementary level for these women.

All of the teachers are women now in their late forties to mid-fifties. All were born in Japan either during the last days of World War II or immediately following the peace, early in the "baby boom" period taking place in the U.S. at that time. All claim Japanese as their first language, and all additionally speak English. Several are proficient in a third language.

All are married, and in three cases met their future husbands in Japan when the men had come there in connection with the military or to study or both. All teachers are married to Americans--four to men born in the U.S. (one has remarried to another American since the death her first husband) and one to a Chinese who is a naturalized citizen. All five teachers are mothers. Three have two children and two have three

children in the U.S.. Four of the teachers came to the United States during the late '70s or early '80s, but one immigrated with her immediate family as early as the 1950s.

All attained education beyond high school. Four of the teachers attended elementary school in Japan and most continued there through high school and post secondary education. Yoshiko and Misako in Raleigh enrolled in vocational/ business courses in Japan after high school. As undergraduates Sumako, Kazuko and Devi trained to teach and then pursued graduate courses in the United States. But not one of the teachers interviewed stated that she was initially planning to become a teacher of the Japanese language.

What are the essential characteristics of these veteran Japanese language teachers in the elementary schools? It is a singular, yet multifaceted, characteristic. It is that they, the teachers, are themselves Japanese. Even the teacher who identifies herself as Japanese/East Indian, born of a mixed race marriage, learned Japanese as a first language as did the four other teachers who had both Japanese mothers and fathers. The Japanese language and culture has been a part of all of their lives since their earliest memories, and they have a strong identification, respect and even need for it.

Turning Point: World War II

For the Japanese language to be more widely studied in the United States, Japanese and American people required a catalyst to move them closer to one another. The iconic event that set the stage for Japanese language study in the United States was World War II. America's involvement in the reconstruction of Japan after the war years began setting the stage for the study of the language here in the United States.

Although some American servicemen stationed in Japan immediately following the war did take Japanese brides, fraternization was strongly discouraged. The Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 specifically excluded the Japanese, and persons ineligible for citizenship were not permitted to immigrate to the United States. The Japanese were also discouraged or prohibited from marrying Americans (Shukert & Scibetta, 1988). When this later baby boom generation of Japanese, of which the teachers interviewed belong, came of age in the 70s, conditions were also becoming favorable for beginning early Japanese language programs in the United States. American laws that were racially restrictive had been rescinded earlier. Japanese traditions and customs that had dissuaded marriage outside the race were overcome.

The Japanese economy was gearing up and would astonish the world with its growth in the '80s. Numerous states and local school districts were becoming interested for the first time since Sputnik in implementing early language programs for children.

Lack of demand or need for Japanese language instruction in the United States before this time can be illustrated by looking at the educational institutions in America that traditionally train language teachers. The number of teacher training programs focusing on Japanese language in the United States at any level is still extremely limited. The Japan Language Foundation, in its newsletter (The Breeze, June 1994), reports only 13 colleges in the United States offer a master's degree in teaching Japanese or related fields. Those programs which also focus on Japanese in the elementary schools can be considered to be practically nonexistent .

The end of the Second World War offered opportunities for Americans and Japanese to intermingle on numerous levels as never before, particularly in Japan. Half a million Americans were stationed in Japan within months of the end of the war.

This strong military presence remained during the period of occupation, reconstruction and normalization of relations. Somewhat later, numerous educational opportunities began opening up for Americans to travel to Japan and later for Japanese to travel here. Japan, as part of the revamping of its public school curriculum after the war included the study of English as a requirement. In the late '70s and through the '80s the strong Japanese yen supported travel all over the world of Japanese nationals.

But before the Second World War, relations between Americans and Japanese, even on the mainland, were often strained and uneasy. Takai (1989) suggests that Japanese immigrants inherited the resentment and prejudice formerly reserved for the Chinese, an earlier and larger Asian immigrant group to the west coast. Kazuko encounters a taste of this attitude when she reacts to the question "Why are you here?" referring to her teaching in a regular class. "And at first I get sort of angry. Why not, I'm an educator. I can teach anybody . . . black or white or . . ."

Sumako understands the prejudice and tension through the story of her grandparents' tragic loss of their son in the fire. She experiences the difficulty of the loss of that same child, her father's brother, as a turning point for her immediate family. The fears that put her father, mother and siblings on the opposite side of the Pacific from her grandparents during World War II became the force that brought her family to America. She identifies the attitude that initiated the chain of events leading to her family's wartime separation. "It was due to racism." Understandably, Sumako must wonder at the irony of her family's separation during the war, and sadden when she thinks of her grandparents' confinement in the internment camp.

The end of the World War II is now three years beyond a half century, but residual ambivalent feelings towards the Japanese continue to linger in parts of the American culture. Only recently has the Japanese language been viewed in the United

States as a language of potential merit and value, as evidenced by its rapid expansion and study during the past decade (Jorden, 1991).

Nevertheless, World War II is crucial to the phenomenon of Japanese study in the United States. Before the war there were essentially no programs of Japanese language of any type within the United States. Slowly following the war and for the fifty years until now there has been growing interest in the language at all levels.

Before the clash of American and Japanese cultures in the second world war, involvement between the two cultures had been minimal. The Japanese language has never been widely studied in the United States. Few Japanese people in this country, and relatively late development of trade between the United States and Japan had resulted in very little need for the language here. Takai (1989) claims that in 1900 there were only 2,039 Japanese on the U.S. mainland. This number rose to over 72,000 two decades later. Reischauer (1977) states that as late as 1934 fewer than 13 scholars in the United States had any ability to use the Japanese language, providing strong evidence to the lack of interest in this area. Less than half a decade later the United States found itself suffering from this national language deficiency as it entered the Second World War.

The war was the catalyst for the mix of Japanese and American languages and cultures, and directly influenced the formative years of all five teachers interviewed. In the case of at least three of the five veteran teachers, marriage to American students/military personnel pointed and propelled their lives in a direction toward the United States. All five teachers spent their early lives in Japan during the American occupation of that country following the war. Living in Japan at that time one could not have remained untouched by the consequences of the war, yet in the interviews the war was treated more as a reference point rather than a critical event.

Cultural and Language Differences

The dubious idea that the Japanese language and culture differ so extremely from English as to essentially be unknowable for the native speaker of English is an idea that has gained greater acceptance as the two languages and cultures have come into closer contact. Following closely on this idea of the relative difficulty of the language is the often encountered opinion that instruction of Japanese to American speakers of English must necessarily differ from the instruction of other languages. Data gathered for this project suggest that the difference is more a matter of degree than of substance. The five Japanese teachers were keenly aware of the challenges in Japanese language and culture for American school children. They understood the question of the differences in teaching Japanese from that of teaching other languages to native English speakers, and its relative difficulty for native English speakers to learn. Yoshiko relates her own daughter's difficulty with formal study of Japanese in college and mastering the written skills. "But she hate to work, especially kanji. . . . It takes time . . . Yeh, it's hard." Kazuko's assertion that children's needs are different and that even the Japanese children "want to keep up their language" further highlights the different needs these teachers address. The teachers attempt to bridge and mediate these differences.

The five teachers were relatively consistent in their views on the instruction of Japanese language and culture for young children. That the language instruction must be relevant and meaningful, authentic, active and hands on was a given. The only area of disagreement came when asking teachers to list by order of importance the emphasis that they place on the four skills areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Three of the teachers suggested that the above order was appropriate to describe the focus they placed on the skills, yet two teachers (one from each coast)

suggested that the skill of writing may take precedence over and actually help in the development of reading in that language. One teacher, in fact, without saying so in explicit ways, intuitively subscribes to a holistic approach by integrating language study within the regular curriculum and might be expected to depart radically from an isolated skills approach or philosophy to guide language teaching and learning.

The Japanese language offers numerous challenges for the English speaker. Hosakawa (1991) suggests that mastering the Japanese language is beyond the capabilities of most non-Japanese who have not grown up with the language, yet he does not believe that such proficiency is a necessity. The Jorden study (1991) warns that the Japanese taught in certain schools is not authentic. Yet Japanese programs have grown at all levels, and several of the interview subjects spoke of students they had taught early in their careers with whom they had maintained contact. These students had continued Japanese language study and now are involved in activity related to the Japanese language, either in Japan or in the United States. As such, the students are among the first to have begun Japanese language study in US elementary schools, following a sequence of Japanese language instruction that typically moved from programs in the elementary school, through middle school, high school and on to college. The fact that an articulated system of Japanese language instruction was available to these students is in itself an extremely rare occurrence in the United States.

Theoretically, all languages fall on a prototypical language continuum, and the data suggest that Japanese and English fall so far apart on this continuum as to be considered "opposite." It is this degree of distance between the two languages pressing the contention that Japanese is different. The issues involved with planning, implementing, and maintaining elementary foreign language programs in U.S. schools,

in general, are amplified when that foreign language is Japanese. Proven program models, resources, materials, and teachers are less available. Development of proficiency in Japanese takes relatively longer for English speakers than commonly taught languages. Certainly, many current second language instructional methods based on sound second language acquisition theory are appropriate to the Japanese language classroom as reported by the interviewees, yet these methods should be filtered through a Japanese cultural screen to be authentic and useful.

Program Types and the Students They Serve

The interview data collected for this project provides a unique way to begin looking at Japanese language programs in the elementary schools. Comparisons can be made between and among teachers and classrooms, schools, school districts, states and even geographical regions. But it is at levels closest to the instruction that these comparisons are most distinct.

A schema for categorizing early programs of Japanese in the elementary schools can be helpful in understanding the settings in which teachers instruct. The work of Rhodes (1985), later adapted by Curtain and Pesola (1994,1988) provides a means for viewing and understanding elementary foreign language programs that are sequential, cumulative, continuous, proficiency-oriented and part of a K-12 sequence. In this format program types are distinguished by 1) the percent of class time spent in the language per week; and 2) the goals set forth for the program. Program types, in descending order according to the time variable, are designated as total immersion, two-way immersion, partial immersion, content-based FLES and FLES programs. Non -continuous and non-articulated programs, usually part of an integrated K-12 sequence

yet still based on goals and time, are deemed FLEX (foreign language exploratory) programs.

Thinking about Japanese language programs using this schema is helpful, yet lacks an essential variable suggested by this researcher's data--the presence of additional (usually native) language aides/helpers in the classroom and the effect this additional person can have on teaching and learning. In San Francisco these additional personnel are the *sensei*. Data suggest that twenty-five years ago it was those in the role of sensei who actually began the program in San Francisco. At Wiley in Raleigh, it is Yoshiko's JALEX interns, there for a one-year tour, who aid her and assist in the language instruction under her direction. For the past seven years she has applied annually to receive an young Japanese intern through the JALEX organization. And each August she begins training this temporary recruit to aid her in the instruction of the language and culture.

Additional language personnel in the classroom have the potential for helping students make greater strides in the language. Effective and efficient management and coordination of these personnel is essential for the success of a program yet is an on-going concern. Little research is available to guide teachers or administrators in understanding this variable.

Also, the inclusion of native Japanese speaking children within the program supplies an additional resource for language learning. Pesola and Curtain (1994) anticipate native language children in their definition of a Two-Way Immersion model (the model parallel to the Dual Immersion program at Clarendon in San Francisco), yet this researcher discovered that native Japanese language children are sometimes included in other program types, as well. Placed there by sensitive and well-meaning administrators as a means to allow the Japanese children to experience a sense of

success in their own language and culture, these children may or may not additionally participate in an ESL program. What impact these children have on the development of Japanese language for the target group of American children is largely unresearched.

These additional two variables, 1) extra instructional personnel, and 2) native language students within the classroom suggests the need for a revised schema for classification of second language programs in the elementary schools (see Rhodes (1985) and Pesola & Curtain (1993) for elaborations of a revised schema).

Along with the need to understand the goals of programs and the time dedicated to instruction for reaching these goals is the need to look at the quality of personnel in the instructional positions. A means of credentialing for Japanese language teachers in the elementary schools is an area of need suggested by the data collected. Indeed, preliminary research has pointed out that credentialing in Japanese language remains an unresolved issue in most states. Credentials generally indicate that an authoritative body has determined that the individual holding the credential possesses a level of the language sufficient to allow her or him to teach Japanese language and culture at a specified standard, along with an understanding of how children learn languages. Not specific to Japanese but equally important for the success of any foreign language teacher is an understanding of child development and the ability to teach and work within the parameters of an American elementary school educational setting.

Credentialing is believed to be important in the profession for it is a first step in setting and upholding the Japanese language standard for the teaching and learning that is anticipated to take place. It is also important for the self-esteem of the Japanese teacher by validating that the teacher possesses what are considered to be the qualifications necessary to be successful in the teaching endeavor.

In conducting preliminary research for this project numerous incidents of Japanese teachers instructing in Japanese programs were encountered who were not specifically credentialed to teach the language. These teachers have become involved with the program, often through the efforts of school officials looking to begin a FLES program. Perhaps the " teacher" had spent some time in Japan and had begun learning the language, and perhaps a school principal or a school board member had knowledge of this individual. Unfortunately the low level of understanding of second language learning in general and Japanese language learning in particular results in this type of mismatch of programs, goals and personnel. One with a smattering of Japanese is viewed by the benighted as being an expert. Such teaching encounters for children can have merit, but confidence about outcomes for the students of anything resembling proficiency in the language is unrealistic.

A novice teacher/speaker of Japanese might perhaps carry on some type of Japanese instruction for a year or two, but after the teacher has taught all that she or he knows, the instructional sequence becomes stymied. These short-term programs are characterized as Foreign Language Exploratory Programs (FLEX) and are noncontinuous and nonarticulated (Curtain & Pesola, 1994). It is nearly impossible to move childrens' second language ability much beyond the level of language ability of the current instructor. A teacher is better able to draw upon his or her inner knowledge of language and culture to invigorate teaching within the program if that knowledge is near-native, natural, and authentic knowledge.

Conditions Necessary for Programs to Endure

The most inclusive definition of Japanese language program in the elementary schools appears to be whatever and wherever a teacher of Japanese instructs. Yet as discussed in the above section, programs are not all equal and the viability of programs

is not all the same. Certain conditions do, however, appear to promote the implementation, maintenance and growth of Japanese language programs in elementary school settings.

The program in California began in response to Japanese parents there. Must there be sizable ethnic Japanese population from which to draw potential students? Perhaps not, but it must certainly help. One of the earliest destinations of Japanese to the U.S. mainland is San Francisco and the Bay Area, which have sizable concentrations of ethnic Japanese.

Related to this issue of a supportive Japanese population are the strong Japanese language program advocacy (parent) groups which appear to be a constant in order for teachers and programs to succeed. And interestingly, observation of the advocacy groups suggests that the membership may include mostly American parents, such as in Yoshiko's program, or Japanese and American parents, as in the program in San Francisco. In the latter, the parents actually raise tens of thousands of dollars yearly to support the program through salaries of the sensei and materials. Devi suggests that direct solicitation of parents for funds is common, and explains it as a type of tuition. In Raleigh, parent groups have advocated for better space, more materials, and improved schedules for the Japanese language program.

Raleigh and the surrounding Triangle Area have smaller but growing populations of Japanese. Japanese businesses have located in the state following a strong recruitment effort. The establishment by state legislature in 1980 of the North Carolina Japan Center in Raleigh underscored the states efforts and commitment at bringing in these industries. Newly arriving Japanese businesses to the state and the families that come with them are a primary source of Japanese nationals in the Raleigh area. Graduate students at North Carolina State University, nearby Duke University

and the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, as well as numerous other colleges in the area have long been an attraction for Japanese pursuing higher education. Yet in Raleigh it was the school administration that first conceived and implemented Japanese programs K-12 as part of magnet school plan. It was from the local population of Japanese nationals that the original teachers for the programs were recruited. Strong parent and community interest at Wiley Elementary developed after initial program implementation, largely due to Yoshiko's efforts. Today commitment continues. No such parent group as at Clarendon or Wiley ever developed at Poe International Magnet School as a support to the Japanese program there. Today that Japanese program is dissolved.

Legislative Connections

The association of Title VII funding authorized through the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 with the programs in which the sample of teachers involved in this study were drawn has been an intriguing connection. From some of the earliest beginnings Japanese language instruction at the elementary school level has been, at the very least, subtly supported, financed and carried forth with funding and impetus through Title VII and its various interests.

Even more intriguing has been the discovery that *Lau v. Nichols*, the class action suit filed in 1970 on behalf of 13 Chinese children in San Francisco that ended with the Supreme Court decision five years later in 1975 was percolating at a time when the early Japanese program there was being organized in that city. *Lau v. Nichols* is considered the landmark case in the education of limited English proficient students. Ironically, during this same time period the dual Japanese immersion program at Clarendon was demanded of the school board by Japanese parents. It was

approved, planned and implemented before the Supreme Court rendered its decision on *Lau*.

Title VII funding provided the money for full-time senseis, program development, materials and training for the implementation at Clarendon. This fact is particularly intriguing to me, for it is implies that during the same time period that the Chinese community was taking the San Francisco Unified School District to court to gain relief from lack of educational opportunity for their non-English speaking students, the Japanese community was taking a different approach with the same school board. What, if any, was the interaction between the Japanese and Chinese communities at the time concerning this issue?

The relationship among programs for Japanese students learning English as a second language and American students learning Japanese became apparent early in the research conducted for this study. The two schools in Raleigh---Wiley in which Yoshiko teaches and Poe where Misako taught until the spring of 1997, were ESL center schools even before their designation as international magnets in 1982. At that time Japanese language programs along with programs in other languages were added. The philosophy was that the ESL population would enhance the new international vision set forth for those schools.

Questions arose concerning the application of these monies for personnel and materials in foreign language programs (including Japanese) in the magnet programs. The role of Title VII in implementation of the Japanese programs remains somewhat vague in Raleigh. After initial implementation, confusion and controversy arose around the use of federal funds, including Title VII funds, for the implementation of the magnet system, these irregularities led to the resignation of the superintendent and several high level administrators. A federal audit was conducted in the mid '80s

centering on the funds involved with magnet implementation in 1982, the time at which the Japanese programs began. Although irregularities were discovered with the use of some federal funds, no direct funding problems were found related Japanese programs at Poe and Wiley. Such scrutiny did not appear to have an adverse effect on the programs at the schools. Title VII funding did provide for some personnel training with those associated with the Japanese programs, but the training was conducted as second language and culture study, appropriate to all languages and culture, and difficult to tease out and ascribe to Title VII since it was so enmeshed with other funding sources.

Following this line of investigation, the relationship of Japanese language teachers and programs and their utilization to complement/supplement and even integrate with English as a Second Language (ESL) programs has become more evident. The reciprocal relationship of programs in the past is apparent, as in the school in San Francisco where both languages are being taught to all children in the classroom. But what effect Proposition 227 will have on such programs remains to be seen. In Raleigh at Wiley Elementary International Magnet Program, Yoshiko has over the years rounded out her teaching schedule by giving ESL instruction and serves as a special resource to any native Japanese children who might be attending there.

Closely related to Title VII and California's Proposition 227 is the issue of multiculturalism, the relationship of language to culture and its implications for instruction and learning. From interviewing the five teachers, it became apparent that they generally viewed their purpose of instruction to be greater than just teaching Japanese language and culture. First, it was clear that these teachers were concerned with the development of the whole child. Sumako doesn't "separate teaching Japanese

from teaching children." Kazuko expresses, "More than language, educating children is my life."

And In these schools the mix of children was viewed as a positive arrangement and an essential resource. Kazuko explains, " . . . children, they are really neat. They teach. Their power is the strongest. They teach each other. So I use their power."

The teachers utilize Japanese to help children become more aware and open to all languages and cultures--to become multicultural. Devi understands that, "Children should be encouraged to go back to their roots and really experience their background . . . and not just Japanese but multicultural."

Although they expressed a concern that children learn authentic Japanese, the teachers interviewed never indicated an attempt to "turn" English speaking children into Japanese children. Rather their concern was that children understand appropriate Japanese language and behavior.

Language and culture, at least authentic language and culture, are two sides of the same coin. In any real setting, the cultural situation informs and influences the style of language to be used, while the language style shapes and forms the cultural situation and setting. To emphasize one element of either language or culture and to ignore the other is not only bad teaching, it's inappropriate and unauthentic teaching. Japanese is a behavioral language, and as such the degree of dependence on the situation for the choice of response is more important than in the commonly taught languages. Japanese can perhaps be understood as an almost perfect contrast to the English language system as to be viewed as "opposite." For native English speakers, learning Japanese can provide the examples to develop a high awareness of multiculturalism.

Summary

The objective of this study was to look at common characteristics of veteran teachers of Japanese language in the elementary schools and thereby better understand the newly emerging field of early Japanese language study for children in the United States. Data were gathered through interviews conducted with a convenience sample of five teachers who 1) have taught Japanese language at the elementary level for five years or longer and 2) who are currently teaching Japanese at this level.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the problem, relating the brief history of Japanese language study in the United States and the current status of these programs to the literature concerning early language programs for children in the United States. Additionally, the case study methodology for conducting this project is described and the criteria for the convenience sample of five teachers to be interviewed is related. This criteria is that the teachers 1) have taught Japanese in an elementary school for five years or longer, full or part time, and 2) that they were currently teaching at the time of the interview.

Chapters 2 through 6 are the narrative interpretations of the individual teacher interviews. Each is a personal and unique representation of the lives of the individuals as relates to how they became teachers of Japanese in the elementary schools, and their current interest, work and understanding of teaching children in early Japanese language programs.

Chapter 7 begins with a profile of the five teachers interviewed and shows that all are female, born into Japanese families in Japan in the mid to late 1940s. All have married American husbands, and most met their mates when the men were in military service in Japan. The marriages were instrumental to the subjects' immigration to the

United States. All of the interviewees have reared families in the United States. Not one interviewee expected to become a teacher of Japanese language.

Additional findings are given, reasoning from the data that World War II was the critical factor marking the beginning of interest in Japanese language study in the United States. Before that time few Japanese had been on the U.S. mainland, and prejudice against the Japanese culture, continuing for several decades after the war, helped block interest in the language. Cultural and language differences have also fueled the perception that Japanese is a difficult language for Americans to learn. The degree of difference between the Japanese language and culture and the English language and the American culture is a fact, but not an insurmountable obstacle when teaching Japanese to American children.

Conditions that appear necessary for programs to endure and the variety of existing program types are suggested through the data. Is an ethnic population of Japanese as well as the creation of parent advocacy groups an essential for institutionalization of early Japanese language programs? These groups may be instrumental in the development and implementation of programs as in Clarendon or they may organize to help maintain and set a direction for Japanese language programs as at Wiley Elementary. Can programs sustain without a parent group?

The role of Title VII funds of the Bilingual Education Act in the development of Japanese language programs, often parallel to ESL programs, is discussed. The *Lau v. Nichols* Supreme Court decision of 1975, an action happening in a nearly concurrent time frame with the establishment of the program at Clarendon in the San Francisco Unified School District has been a surprising finding. Too, the current concern with Proposition 227 in California and its potential impart on the Two-way Japanese Bilingual Program at Clarendon is questioned. Lastly, recommendations and implications for further study are examined.

Recommendations and Implications for Further Study

This research has explored characteristics common to selected teachers of Japanese language in elementary schools located in a disparate set of sites in Raleigh, North Carolina, and in San Francisco, California, through an interview process designed to investigate the essential characteristics common to veteran Japanese language teachers of early Japanese language programs. Yin (1989) suggests that case study becomes a communication device, the description and analysis of which often conveys information about more general phenomena.

Policy makers such as legislators, school board members and superintendents, and policy implementors, such as district supervisors and teachers, want to know what a study such as this reveals and what these revelations suggest about the implementation of future programs. The following topics help crystallize the revelations of this study and lead to recommendations for future practice:

- the changeable nature over time of the rationale(s) put forth to support the implementation of Japanese programs, and
- the necessity for authentic language and the role of those teachers charged with its instruction.

Reasons given for the implementation of Japanese programs in this study were varied and various and tended to mutate and overlap over time. The Clarendon program was initially implemented as a culture-driven, grass roots effort but had to eventually address concerns about optimal instruction for Japanese language development of its students. Programs implemented in Raleigh were a top-down, administration-generated model, with a thrust toward language development for students as a "tool," yet to remain viable required attention be given to Japanese culture and authentic language.

Authentic language, that is, the language native speakers would utilize in a given situation, is best taught by teachers who are themselves authentic or near authentic models, and this knowledge is intimately associated with the knowledge of the target culture. Yet good language teaching requires another set of skills, those actions and activities commonly identified as "good teaching."

These ideas suggest that future programs will have a stronger chance to succeed if both language instruction issues and cultural needs issues are addressed in the initial stages of program planning and implementation. Additionally, careful attention to the selection of instructional personnel necessarily reflects all the aforementioned conditions to the students being instructed.

The exploratory nature of the case study can set the stage for investigations of new questions arising from the data. One unresearched aspect of the early Japanese language programs is the effect of additional instructional personnel, including aides and volunteers, on student learning in any program type. Parallel to the need to understand what effect these personnel might have is the effect of native (target) language children in the language classroom, especially in program types other than those described as dual immersion or two-way bilingual. The inclusion of target language children in the foreign language classroom additionally leads to the need to better understand the dynamics of elementary Japanese language classes and their interaction, ESL programs, and programs of multicultural education. The "mix" of children served is important.

Japanese language programs in the elementary schools and the teachers who work within them are in a novel and not well understood field. On the one hand, an understanding of these programs helps one to understand the issues involved in elementary foreign language programs of commonly taught languages such as Spanish

or French. But perhaps more importantly such understanding enlightens us about the special issues surrounding newly emerging early language programs of less commonly taught languages in the United States such as Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, and others.

It is apparent that the Japanese teachers interviewed view their role as preparing children to live in a multicultural world, utilizing Japanese language and culture as a tool to open children's minds to the diversity they begin to encounter in the school, and will later encounter in their world. Questions that might be raised involve the issues of what training is currently available to individuals wishing to pursue teaching of Japanese at the elementary level. What should the curriculum of such programs include? How can these students be best trained in terms of 1) their Japanese language skills and 2) their pedagogical/elementary school skills.

Too, a question often skirted in the data is what type of student does Japanese language study most benefit and in what type of setting should this instruction be given? Should only students with a strong language aptitude and who are willing to make a commitment to Japanese study over time be selected? And, should magnet schools, charter schools, and residential schools having greater scheduling flexibility be the preferred educational setting in which to locate early Japanese language programs due to the greater time needed to develop proficiency?

Finally, given the ever-increasing emphasis on multiculturalism in our shrinking world and the strong indications and probability that interest in Japanese language programs will increase in the future, a question must be raised about just who should be conducting further research. Clearly, the teachers of Japanese, such as those interviewed in this study, have strong insights and knowledge, and this resource should be used to inform progress in other areas. The development of standards currently taking place for the teaching of Japanese language in the United States is a positive

step in understanding the context and challenges of Japanese language instruction in this country. Networks of Japanese language teachers that have been organizing within the past few years, both at the state and national levels, can help to meet the needs of teachers and researchers within their own programs. Knowledge gained from these groups should inform the continuing development of programs for the instruction of the Japanese language.

APPENDIX
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Date_____

Location_____

Biographical Information
*Subject's name

*Birth (maiden) name

*Gender

*Date of birth

*Age

*Place of birth

*Ethnicity (Japanese/non-Japanese)

*Language (s) grew up speaking or studied, including where/ when/why first learned Japanese

*Residence information (chronological) including special circumstances for regular moves such as military

*If not born in Japan, have you ever visited there? When and for how long and what purpose?

*Is interviewee married? Children? Ages? Do children speak Japanese?

Questions about Education and Training

*What is your educational background? Highest level of education attained?

*Emphasis or specialization is any?

*Specific training for teaching and specific training for teaching Japanese/ Japanese in the elementary schools prior to entering the field?

Questions about Work Experience

*What other significant jobs have you had or do you currently hold?

*When/Where/How?To whom did you first begin teaching Japanese? Describe.

*Describe your experiences teaching Japanese at the elementary school level:
From 19_____ to present

Number of times class meets per week

Amount of time per each class period

Number of students per class

Describe setting, room, etc.

Describe your teaching.

Private school/public school? Magnet, year-round, after school program?

Describe students and their reasons for taking Japanese.

Add any additional information you feel is pertinent.

Instructional Strategy

*Of the four skills--listening, speaking, reading and writing--order the skills in the importance placed on them in your classroom.*If writing is taught, in what year of instruction is it begun?

*Which syllabary is first introduced--*hiragana* or *katakana*?

*Is romanization used?

*If *kanji* is taught when is is introduced?

Questions Regarding Historical and Contemporary Issues

*How/why did you become involved teaching Japanese at the elementary school level?

*From where has your greatest support in teaching Japanese come?

*Tell me about a time that you were really proud to be teaching Japanese in the elementary school.

*Tell me about your greatest disappointment in teaching Japanese in the elementary school, and if and how you have overcome this disappointment.

*Do you fell that you have been successful as a Japanese teacher at the elementary level? What indicators do you use to point to success/failure?

Organizations/Staff Development

*Tell me about any organizations that you belong to that address Japanese language instruction or second language instruction.

*Tell me about staff development opportunities available to you.

*As a Japanese language teacher in you current program, tell me about your greatest needs.

Close Down Question

*Is there anything about teaching Japanese to young children that I haven't asked that you feel I should know?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tim grew up on a dairy farm in the foothills of western North Carolina. As a child he liked "to talk," and as he grew older he became interested in "talk"–not just his own, but that of those who spoke differently. Yet, foreign language offerings in his schoolat that time were limited. Tim was unable to begin studying a foreign language until sophomore year of high school, the only choice at the time being French.

As an undergraduate at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill where he received a B.A. in French with honors. He began sampling other languages and while there studied French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and modern and biblical Hebrew.

After graduation, his interest in Hebrew language and the Middle East led in 1974-75 to a Rotary fellowship to Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel, and additional intensive study in Hebrew, a category 3 language. The "uplan" system of direct instruction used for teaching Hebrew in Israel, a country , was so helpful to Tim that it changed his thinking about the nature of effective foreign language instruction.

Upon returning to the United States, Tim worked in a community college literacy program, which, partly through his efforts, soon developed an English as a second language (ESL) component program. Around this time he completed an M.A. in adult and community college education at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC (1978). Interest in ESL and a Kellogg fellowship led Tim to the Georgetown Summer Institute in Linguistics in Washington, DC, in 1979 for ESL, and within the next year he found himself director of a Title VII bilingual grant for the Wake County public schools in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he still works today. Within two years he was also in charge of the foreign language program, K-12. At that time (1983), he finished an

education specialist in higher education degree from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC.

In 1984, an interest in second language education and ESL pointed Tim toward the University of Florida. The award of a Title VII fellowship and a supportive school district made a year's educational leave possible, and he completed an education specialist degree in bilingual education. Afterward, he returned to work in the rapidly growing Wake County public school system as supervisor of second languages. Returning to Florida in the late 80s to pursue a doctoral degree, Tim viewed his courses and professional relationships there as the staff development activity and complement to the role of second language supervisor that he maintained with the school system.

The subject of Japanese language might seem an unlikely one to be studied by a North Carolina farm boy, but when the time came to choose a dissertation topic, it seemed to him quite logical. In the preceding years, his work had focused on developing and implementing programs of foreign language in his school district, Japanese among them. Working with these programs, he came to understand how novel Japanese language instruction in the U.S. was at any level. Researching the subject merged an interest and background in program development, languages and linguistics, and multicultural education.

Being involved at that time (1991) with a Japanese teacher exchange program affiliated with East Carolina University, Tim was asked by his school system to recruit a teacher for an elementary Japanese program for his own school district. What he learned from the process, which included being the host family to the native Japanese teacher and her teenage son during that first school year, helped fashion his perspective on the subject of Japanese language instruction in the U.S. Seven years later, the Japanese teacher Tim recruited remains living and teaching Japanese in the school district.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Regina Weade, Chair
Associate Professor of Instruction and Curriculum

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Roger M. Thompson
Associate Professor of English

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Clemens L. Hallman
Professor of Instruction and Curriculum

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Mary Lou Koran
Professor of Foundations of Education

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

December 1998

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